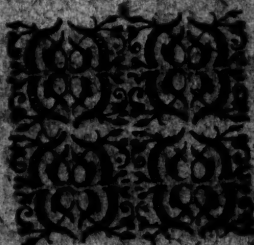


AN
ESSAY
UPON

Gospel and Legal Preaching.

LUKE V. 39. No man having
drunk old Wine, desireth
new: for he saith, the old is
better.

By a Minister of the Church of Scot-
land.



EDINBURGH.

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AN
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Gospel and legal *Preaching*;

TIS a Truth generally received, that the great Work of the Ministers of the Gospel is to preach the glad Tidings of Salvation, and the glorious Dispensation of the Grace and Mercy of God to Sinners; in and thro' Jesus Christ, together with what is demanded of them, that they may share of the Blessings of his Purchase. This is to be the Subject of their Meditations and Sermons; the Apostle of the *Gentiles* determined not to know any Thing, *says Jesus Christ and him crucified*, 1. Cor. ii. 2. The Son of God himself came from Heaven to Earth, to enlighten the World with a full and clear Discovery of the Mind of God concerning our Salvati-

on, he went about doing Good, *preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, Matth. ix. 35.* and confirming his heavenly Doctrine by Miracles, that were as great Instances of his Goodness to Men, as of his Dominion over Nature. The Spirit was poured down from on high upon the Apostles, to qualifie them for preaching the Gospel to all Nations, to translate the *Gentiles from Darknes to Light, Acts xxvi. 18.* and to call the *Jews from Moses to Christ, from the Shadow to the Substance*, from a more dark and imperfect, to a more clear and full Dispensation of the Grace and Mercy of God to poor Sinners. These first Champions of Christianity, with the most ardent Zeal and unwearied Diligence, spread the Light of the Gospel thro' a dark World, they fought their Way thro' Pain, Poverty, Hunger, Cold, Nakedness, Infamy, Dangers and Deaths, and counted not their Lives dear, so that they might finish their Course with Joy, and fulfil the Ministry they received of the Lord. Their Courage rose as [their Dangers grew upon them, they outbraved Death in all the Circumstances of Terror, and by their Blood and Sufferings sealed that precious Doctrine they preached to the World.

They who are honoured of God to be put into the Ministry, and helped to be faithful, have nothing more at Heart than to declare the whole Counsel of God to Sinners; that they may rescue them from the Dominion of their [Lusts, the Tyranny of Satan, and the Danger of Damnation, and bring them to Jesus, that they may be saved from Sin, delivered from the Wrath that is to come, and possessed of a blessed Immortality. This is the *White* they aim at, and the End of all their mini-

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ministerial Labours. Zeal for God, and Compassion to the Souls of Men, carry them thro' a Multitude of Difficulties in the Discharge of their Ministry. It can't but affect them in a very sensible Manner, to find that their Labours are rendered in a great Measure useless, thro' the mistaken Notions and false Prejudices of many who give the Nickname of *legal Preaching* to what they look on as true Gospel. When once this Prejudice gets footing in the Minds of Men, they put an effectual Bar in the Way of reaping Benefit to themselves, by the most useful Sermons, and do a vast deal of more Harm to themselves, than possibly they can to the Preacher.

We live in an Age wherein we hear a great deal of Talk about *Legal and Gospel Preaching*, tho' I'm afraid many talk by Rote, and have no just Notion of either. I have heard some exclaim with abundance of Heat against *legal Preaching*, who needed to be instructed in the very first Principles of the Oracles of God. When I have asked what they meant by it, I could find nothing but a dark and confused Jumble of incoherent Notions; I looked on them with Concern, to find so much Zeal spent against a Thing they knew little or nothing about: It brought to my Mind the Remark of one, who was no injudicious Observer of Men and Things, *qui minima sentiunt facile pronunciant*. I could not but heartily pity them, and thought it would be Charity to their Souls, to attempt at least the removing of their groundless Mistakes and Prejudices. This was the Thing that first led my Thoughts to the Consideration of this Subject, what I read in a very long Preface to a Book, made me view it more closely; for, any
A 2 Thing

Thing I know it has been little discoursed of: I am modestly, but withal freely, to essay somewhat on't, which I pray God may reach the End designed, and provoke better Pens to discuss it more thoroughly.

Whoever would talk with Clearness and Distinctness upon a Subject, must open up and explain it, he must fix determinate Ideas to Terms and Phrases he uses, else he'll talk in the Dark, and convey no Light to others, he may puzzle and perplex a Subject with a Flow of Words, but he can't possibly enlighten it. I shall therefore consider what *legal Preaching* is, and then proceed to shew what *Gospel Preaching* is.

Legal Preaching, (as I take it) is Preaching in the Strain of the *old Covenant of Works*. The Law was given before the Gospel was promulgated, and was written originally on Man's Heart, it was the Matter of that Covenant God was pleased to make with Man at his first Creation. It supposed him innocent, and furnished with sufficient Abilities to do whatever was demanded of him, it promised Life to *Adam*, and in him to all his Posterity, upon Condition of perfect and personal Obedience, and threatned Death upon the smallest Transgression. It knew nothing of a *Surety-righteousness*, it spoke not one Syllable about Faith in Jesus, the great Instrument of our Justification and Salvation; it opened no Door for Repentance, but excluded the one and the other, as inconsistent with its Make and Frame, and the Circumstances of an innocent Man. By the Entrance of Sin into the World, Man's Circumstances are intirely changed, the first Dispensation of God to give Life, was rendred ineffectual to reach the End designed. *The Law*

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Law became weak thro' the Flesh, Rom. viii. 3. Man could not perfectly obey, and could not therefore expect Life by his Obedience. He was lying under the Threatning, and tho' he could have perfectly obeyed for the Time to come, this would not have satisfied God's Justice for his bypast Transgressions. Now if any should preach perfect Obedience, as the Condition of Life, and tell us, that the smallest Transgression of the Law will exclude us Heaven, this would be *legal* with a Witness; but I suppose there are none of our Ministers so bad Divines, as to lead Men who are Sinners, to Heaven, by a Dispensation that was calculated for an innocent State. A Suit will fit our Backs well enough in the Bloom of Youth, that would be ridiculous to be put on us, in the Decrepitness of old Age.

In Innocency when God made a Covenant with *Adam*, as the Head and Representative of all his Posterity, he had a sufficient Fund of his own; had he made a right Use of it, he and his Posterity had been happy, he needed not a Redeemer's Grace to purify his Heart, and to assist him in his Obedience, but by the Fall Man is become weak and wicked; he neither can, nor will *subject himself to the Law of God, Rom. viii. 7.* By the utmost Improvement of our natural Abilities, and the Advantages we enjoy by a Gospel-revelation, we can't recover our Nature out of its Ruins. 'Tis as great a Miracle in the moral World, to raise a Sinner, dead in Trespasses, and buried in the Grave of his Corruptions, to a spiritual Life, as 'tis in the natural World, to raise a Man from Death to a natural Life. The last is more sensible and affecting, but the first requires no less

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Power,

Power, and is as contrary to all the Laws of Corruption, as the other is to the Laws of Nature. As our Nature is to be changed at first, by a Redeemer's invincible Grace, we need afterwards the daily Aids of it, to strengthen us for every good Word and Work, *Without me* (says our Saviour) *ye can do nothing, as the Branch cannot bear Fruit, except it abide in the Vine, neither can ye, except ye abide in me, John xv. 4, 5.* The Gospel gives us the most mortifying Images of our selves, it represents us to be a very Compound of Darkness, Vanity, Pride, Wickedness and Weakness; 'tis far from flattering our Pride, does not exalt our Powers and Abilities upon the Ruins of Grace, it makes not every Man *faber suæ fortunæ*, it ascribes all the Ill we do to our selves, and the Good we do to a Redeemer, that no Man may glory in himself, it turns us quite off our own Bottom to Jesus, for Grace to help us in the Time of need. Now if any should preach, that Man can obey the holy Law of God, without being regenerated and born of the Spirit: If he should tell us that we have a sufficient Stock of our own to live on, and don't need a Redeemer's Grace to strengthen us for every good Word and Work: This indeed is to preach *legally*, in the Strain of the old Covenant, it were to turn us inward to our selves, instead of carrying us off our own Bottom to a Redeemer, and to exalt Nature upon the Ruins of his Grace.

Under the first Covenant, *Adam's* Intercourse with Heaven was *immediate*. There was no Breach, and therefore no need of a Mediator to compose Differences, but now in a fallen State, our Communion with Heaven is *mediate*, thro' the Intervention

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vention of a third Person. 'Tis unbecoming the infinite Dignity and Majesty, [the spotless Holiness and Purity of the Sovereign of Heaven and Earth, to treat immediately with impure and rebellious Creatures, and therefore he transacts with us thro' Jesus his eternal Son, equal in Power and Glory with himself, and allows us Access only in and by him, *John* xiv. 6. All Blessings flow originally from the Father, thro' Jesus, who has purchased them, and conveys them to us; all our Adresses to the Father are thro' the Son, for 'tis by him that we have Access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now if any should preach that we are to address God immediately, and expect Blessings from his Hand, without the Interposition of a Mediator, this would be *legal Preaching* in the Strain of the first Covenant: He would talk to us as if we were in an innocent State. This is the impious Error of all such Infidels, who stand up for natural Religion, in Opposition to revealed.

The Law, which in a State of Innocency Man had written on his Heart, was dreadfully defac'd by the Fall; and both the Knowledge and Force of it, wofully worn out by the Vices that afterward overspread the World. It lay buried like a Spark amidst a Heap of Ashes. God when he saw his own Law almost lost, was mercifully pleased, to give his Church a second and new Edition of it; which he wrote with his own Hands upon Tables of Stone, to transmit it pure and incorrupted to Posterity. But we find that the *Jews* dealt no better by the Law that was writ upon Tables of Stone, than Mankind before, by the Law engraven on their Hearts. They perverted and corrupted

it, explained away the Life and Spirit of it, and by their impure Comments destroyed the Text, they would not bring up their Lives to the Rule, but brought down the Rule to the crooked Stick. This was the State of the Law when our Saviour appeared in Person in the World, as we may see from his Sermon on the Mount, wherein he rescues it from their false Glosses, sets it in its true Light, and clears it of all that filthy Rubbish they had thrown upon it, to bury the genuin Sense and Meaning thereof. It is obvious, that these violent Perverters of the Law came to entertain an Opinion, that as to the Righteousness thereof they were blameless. They went about, as the Apostle informs us, to establish their own Righteousness, *Rom. x. 3.* When they came short of the moral Law as explained by themselves, they relieved their Consciences with their ceremonial Performances, and did not in the least doubt but they would get Life by their Doings; thus it was with the Bulk of the Jews. They did not enter into God's Design in giving the Law, which was not that they might be justified by it, but that, as a Schoolmaster, it might lead them to Christ, the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one who believe. Now, if any should preach the Law as that which justifies the Sinner; if any should found our Claim to Heaven upon our Obedience to it, they are justly chargeable with preaching *Legally* in the Strain of a *Covenant of Works*, that founded the Title to Happiness upon Obedience. The Apostle tells us very expressly, that *by the Works of the Law no Flesh shall be justified in the Sight of God,* *Rom. iii. 10, Gal. ii. 16.* The Righteousness that

must

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must justifie us, is without us, the Righteousness which is of God through Faith in Jesus Christ.

It cannot be denied but that there is a strong Bias in our Nature toward a Self-righteousness, we retain a deep Tincture of the Covenant of Works, and find a Propensity in our Hearts to build upon something of our own. There is nothing more cross the Grain of proud Nature, than to go intirely off our own Bottom, to depend upon another's Righteousness, this mortifying Doctrine will not go down with the Pride of our Hearts, the Gospel Way of Justification is supernatural, could never have entred our Thoughts, had it not been revealed, it lies intirely out of our Road and Way of thinking, and is above all our natural Notions, and therefore is it that Men rise up so much against it, and naturally fall in with the Schemes that build our Hopes of Justification upon Acts of our own; now if any should preach that Qualifications in us, or any Thing done by us, is our justifying Righteousness, whoever say that either Faith or Repentance is our Righteousness before God, they are chargeable with preaching in the Strain of the *old Covenant*. It turns us inward to Acts of our own as our Righteousness, the Gospel turns us outward to bottom all our Hopes upon a Mediator's Righteousness. One great Design of a Gospel Revelation, is to humble Man, the proudest but poorest Thing in the Creation, and to exalt the Riches of God's Grace, that no Flesh may glory in his Sight; and for the compassing of this Design, it sends us to a Surety-righteousness, as the sole Foundation of our Absolution from the Guilt of our Sins, the Acceptance of our Persons as righteous, and our Title to Life and Glory.

I shall

I shall go a Step further, and maintain that the joyning Works with Faith in the Business of our Justification, is *legal Preaching*. In the Infancy of Christianity, there were many of the *Jewish* Profelytes, who brought alongst with them into the Church, a warm Zeal for the Law of *Moses*, they would not discard Faith from having a Hand in our Justification, for this in effect would have been a rejecting of Jesus, whom they owned and embraced for the *Messias* and Saviour. Well then, what did they do? They were for compounding the Matter, by blending the Law and Faith together, and making an impure and motley Mixture of both, in a Sinner's Justification. Against this Doctrine the Apostle *Paul* disputes, *Gal.* Chap. ii. from the 15. to the End, and Chap. iii. As also in the Epistle to the *Romans*, where he establishes the Doctrine of a Sinner's Justification, by Faith, without the Works of the Law, *Chap.* iii. *Ver.* 28—31.

I shall not grudge, frankly to own, that preaching in the Ways above-named, has a *legal Tang* in it, and should be carefully guarded against by the Ministers of the Gospel; but yet I can never persuade my self, that the urging the Observance of God's Law, and the great Duties of Morality, or preaching Faith and Repentance as necessary in order to our Justification, or the asserting that we are to act *for Life*, as well as *from Life*; and that Believers may be wrought upon by their Hopes and Fears, or preaching the Necessity of Holiness, in order to our Happiness; the Conditionality of the Covenant of Grace, and that a Believer's Sins make him liable to Death. I cannot (I say) look upon this Way of preaching, to be *legal*, till I see better Reasons for it than have yet

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yet appeared. I look on some of these Notions as extremely prejudicial to practical Piety : And this is such a weighty Argument against them, that all the Paint and Colouring that may be laid on them by the most masterly Hand, will never make them appear beautiful in my Eyes. This is an undoubted Principle with me, that whatever Doctrine either destroys Piety, or exalts Men, is not from God, it is the Product of Man's Lusts, and the Issue of Pride. It comes not from above, from the Father of Lights, but from another Airth : Tho' a Doctrine should come with nothing but *Grace, Grace, Grace* in its Mouth, yet if it sap the Foundations of Holiness, and open a patent Door to Lewdness and Licentiousness, I perceive the Devil in *Samuel's* Mantle, the cloven Foot is seen through all the fine Paint and Colouring, and I run from this Devil in the Garbs of Innocency, as the most dangerous to poor Souls. I shall consider these Things that have the Nick-name of *legal Preaching* put upon them by some, and examine them freely and impartially.

I am perswaded that none but the gross *Antinomians* will deny, that the Law of Creation is adopted into the Christian Institution, and made an essential Part of Religion. The Gospel supposes us real Beings, under an inviolable Obligation to the Law of God. It improves the Law of Nature, and enforces the Observance of it with the strongest Motives and Arguments that ever the World heard of. The Apostle *Paul*, who pleads strongly for a Sinner's Justification by Faith without the Law, highly commends the Law as holy, just and good, *Rom. vii. 12.* and declares that the Doctrine of a Sinner's Justification by Faith, does not make void

void, but establish the Law, *Chap. iii. 31.* He carefully guards against low and disparaging Thoughts of the incomparable Law of God, and our abusing the Doctrine of a Sinner's Justification by Faith: Tho' the Law does not justify, yet it has other noble Ends and Purposes, and remains to be an eternal Rule of Righteousness to all rational Creatures. One greater than the Apostle, our blessed Lord and Saviour, in his excellent Sermon on the Mount, hath clear'd the Law of the false Glosses of Men of corrupt Minds, discovered its vast Extent and Spirituality, and enforc'd it on us by the strongest Arguments: He assures us, that he came not to destroy the Law (as his Enemies suggested, that they might create Prejudices in the Minds of his Hearers against his Doctrine and Person) but to fulfil it. He tells his Disciples, *that except their Righteousness, &c. Matth. v. 20.* Our blessed Saviour (I hope) was no legal Preacher, and yet we find him insisting on Purity of Heart, Poverty of Spirit, Peaceableness, Meekness, Mercifulness, Patience and Constancy under the greatest Sufferings, the exactest Justice between Man and Man, Love to our Enemies, forgiving Injuries, Charity in judging of others, giving of Alms, secret Prayer and Fasting.

If we consult the Writings of the holy Apostles we'll quickly perceive them proceeding in the same, Strain with their Lord and Master, *Phil. iv. 8. Tit. ii. 11, 12. II. Pet. i. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.* We find them thundring Death and Damnation upon the Transgressors of the holy Law of God: When they have dispatched the doctrinal Part of their Epistles, they fall upon warm Exhortations to the Practice of the several Parts of our Duty. I imagine, Mini-
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sters will find a Difficulty to go through the Epistles, without insisting upon what some (from more Zeal than Knowledge) name *legal Preaching*.

I have been amazed to hear some lay out their Warmth against *Morality*, and brand it with the Name of *Heathenism*. I know not what Notions they have of *Christian Morality*, but I ever look'd on it, as one of the Glories of our Religion, that it gives us the most pure and perfect System of Morals, that ever was heard of. It carries our Duty higher, than the Light of Nature by its utmost Improvements can do, and is purged from the Dregs that are to be found in the Writings of the most sober *Heathens*, and enforces our Duty by Arguments that the most refin'd Philosophers were altogether ignorant of: What in all the World can offend us at that *Morality* that Christ hath taught us by his Doctrine, exemplified to Perfection in his Life, and enforced so powerfully on us? 'Tis the Observation of one, that *when ever Reason is against a Man, he'll be sure to be against Reason*: I'm afraid, that the Reason of our Opposition to *Morality*, is, that *Morality* is an Enemy to our Lusts, and therefore we are at Enmity with it; we are not for the Severity of the Christian Morals, but would have 'em struck out of the Scheme of our Religion, and some airy Notions placed in their Room, that will give us the Hopes of Heaven, when we come not the Length of an honest Heathen. As the Pride of Mens Minds storms at the Sublimity of Gospel Mysteries, so the Corruptions of their Hearts swell against the Purity and Sanctity of its Precepts; tho' our Minds can't but approve of the Excellency and Usefulness of 'em, yet all the Lusts and Vices of our Hearts make head against 'em. Let us see to it, if this Enmity
does

does not take its Rise from Corruption within ; If this don't make us greedily embrace Schemes of Religion, that reconcile the Hopes of Heaven with a bad Life, and makes the Way to it broader than our Saviour has done ; let us beware by nice Explications, and thin Distinctions, of distinguishing away our Morals, and slackning our Obligation to the strict and rigid Observance of all the several Parts and Branches of our Duty. We see what our blessed Saviour pronounces concerning all such who do it, *Matth. v. 19. He that breaketh one of the least Commandments, &c.* And he upbraids them as fulsom Hypocrites, who under Pretence of *tything Mint, Anise and Cummin, neglect Faith, Mercy, Judgment, the weighty Points of the Law, Matth. xxiii. 23.*

We may pretend what we will, and carry our Pretences as high as we please, but 'tis an indisputable Truth, that we can't be good Christians, while we are immoral Men : A Man may be a Moralist, and yet far from a good Christian ; for Christianity includes much more in it than *Morality*, 'tis a Part, but not the Whole of it, but 'tis impossible he can be a sincere Christian, who is immoral in his Life. Are we Christians, and have no Regard to Truth and Candor, to Justice, Temperance, Mercy ? Will we lie and dissemble like the Devil, turn Sharppers and Tricksters, and make no Bones to oppress our Neighbours by Force and Violence, or overreach them by Fraud and Cunning ? Will we live intemperately, and run into all Excess ? Will we let our Tongues loose upon the whole World, and never stand to bait to Death the Reputation of our Neighbours ? Will we think our selves good because we exclaim against others as bad, and spue forth Abundance of Gall against other Mens Faults, when

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when we have none of it to spend upon our own? And yet for all this, will we set up for Christians! *O homines! O tempora! O mores!* for Shame, we are an Infamy and Disgrace to that Religion we profess. 'Tis struck at, and receives deep Wounds thro' our Sides. The Mouths of Infidels and Libertines are opened to blaspheme Christ and his holy Religion. Are we Christians? No, we come not the Length of sober Heathens. A *Socrates*, a *Seneca*, an *Aristides* were much better Men than we, and will rise up in Judgment against us at the great Day of the Lord.

We have a much better Faith than these Heathens had, but if we live a worse Life, what will it avail us? Can we imagine, that it will make Amends for our immoral Lives? The Scripture acquaints us, that God has no Regard to an inactive Faith, more than to a dead Carcase. For *as the Body without the Soul is dead, so is Faith without Works*. A sound Head and orthodox Sentiments will never take us to Heaven, in Spite of an impure Heart and Life. No Error is more damnable, than Profaneness and Immorality.

I would gladly know what Idea a Man will frame of the Christian Institution, if he strips it of what some are pleas'd to call *dull and dry Morality*. I'm sure he will give a very disadvantageous Character of it, and make it look with a strange and distorted Countenance: He will not miss to expose it very much to the rude Insults of its Enemies, and open the Mouths of your infidel *Deists* to blaspheme it. They will not fail to tell us, that natural Religion enforces the severl Branches of *Morality*, Truth, Justice, Temperance, and an universal good Will and Benevolence to Mankind.

And

And if Christianity be a declared Enemy to these natural Duties, or make small Account of them, he will rest contented with natural Religion, and never trouble himself with the Christian. They who thro' an intemperate and indiscreet Zeal, run down moral Duties, do the greatest Disservice to Religion; they dash the second Table of the Law to Pieces, and raise the first upon the Ruins of the second: They do not consider, that the *agenda* are as necessary a Part of Christianity, as the *credenda*, and that Faith was never design'd of God to destroy Practice; nay, that 'tis only so far valuable in his Eyes, as it purifies the Heart, works by Love, and engages us to the strict Observance of the several Parts of our Duty.

These were the Sentiments that the first Christians had of their Religion, they carried it not only in their Bibles, upon the Tip of their Tongues, but in their Lives, and by the Practice of all the several Parts of their Duty, raised the Admiration of their greatest Enemies, when Religion lay in *doing*, and not in airy *talking*; when they could say, *non magna loquimur, sed vivimus*; * when they could appeal from their Religion it self to their Lives, to prove its Divinity; they recommended it to a heathen World, and adorn'd the Doctrine of God their Saviour. One of the bitterest Enemies that ever Christianity had, *Julian* the Apostate, could not but recommend the Christian Morals to his *Pagans* and *Heathens*. Had Christians inveighed against the unquestionable Duties of *Morality*, as *filthy Heathenism*, what a Stumbling-block and Scandal had they given to the Enemies of their Religion? What in all the World, can ail us at this Time of the Day to exclaim against that *Morality* which shin'd with
such

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such a Lustre and Beauty in the Lives of the primitive Christians? Are we afraid that moral Duties should get too much Footing amongst us? that profess'd Christians should be righteous over much? that they should be Slaves to that sacred Thing *Truth*? that they should turn excessively temperate and moderate in their earthly Enjoyments, and entertain too warm a Love to one another? We are in no Danger from this Quarter; the Corruption and Depravation of our Nature secures us from all such imaginary Fears. God knows that the Christian World is overgrown with all Kinds of Immorality, and hath even lost sober and honest *Heathenism* it self, we are by far more deprav'd and loose in our *Morals* than many of the *Heathens* have been: Such a Dissoluteness of *Manners* universally obtains, as gives all good Men a very melancholy Prospect of Things.

I cannot then but look on it as an Excess of mistaken Zeal, and unseasonable at all Times, but especially at such a Time of the Day, to spend our *Invectives* against *Morality*, and to load these as *legal Preachers*, who from a hearty Concern for these Duties that are Branches of the Law of Nature, and of eternal Obligation, urge them on Christians by all the *Motives* and *Arguments* that the Gospel of God our Saviour sets before us. Why should they go under that *Denomination* especially, when in the strongest Terms they maintain, that they look not on them as our *justifying Righteousness*, in *Whole* or in *Part*. When they tell their Audience, that to make moral Duties Christian Graces, they must proceed from a Heart renew'd by a Redeemer's Grace, that Faith and Love must ly at the Bottom of them, and the

Glory of God, and the Honour of a Redeemer, must be the End of them, that we need daily Influences from Jesus, to enable us *to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in a present World.* Now if after all this, any shall have the Face to call this Way of preaching *legal*, I can't but pity their Weakness, or if they be not weak, they must have a vehement Itch to deal in Calumny and Slander. Charity that *thinketh no Evil*, would put a far better Construction upon this Kind of preaching: Amidst all the Heat and Zeal that some discover, I don't think they would be the worse Men or Christians, if they had somewhat more of that Charity the Apostle so warmly urges on us, and prefers above Faith and Hope, I. Cor. xiii. last Verse.

I know, that one of the Ancients names the Virtues of the Heathens, *splendida peccata*, splendid Sins, because they were not animated with Faith in Jesus, and Love to God, they did not refer them to the Glory of their Maker, but sought themselves in them, and so *sacrific'd to their own Net, and burnt Incense to their own Drag.* Their Philosophers were (as one names 'em) *animalia gloria*, and at Bottom, their Virtues were nothing but a Compound of Pride, Vanity, and Self-seeking: To such a blasphemous Height did no less Person than a *Seneca*, with all his Morals about him, go, as to prefer his wise Man even above *Jupiter* himself. He (saith he) *is wise and good from Choice, the other from mere Necessity.* In this Sense, they were glittering Sins, and so are the best Performances of false Christians, who are not acted by Faith and Love, nor seek God's Glory, and the Honour of a Redeemer, in what they do;
this

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this is like the *Flie in the Apothecary's Ointment that makes it stink*. But never one said, that these moral Virtues were in themselves Sins; 'tis merely by Accident they become sinful, flowing from the Want of a right Principle and End in the doing of them.

If a Man should be an exact *Moralist*, because 'tis agreeable to the *Dictates of Reason*, he behaves like a *rational Being*, and consults the Dignity of the human Nature. If he should practise the Duties of Morality, because they are manifestly for the Advantage and Conveniency of human Society, he acts like a *good Citizen*, who has the Welfare and Happiness of his Fellow-subjects much at Heart. If a Man should practise moral Duties, *Mercy* for Instance, in succouring the miserable, from a natural Tenderneſs, he behaves like a *good-natured Man*, gratifies his own Bowels, by shewing Mercy to others, and falls in with that natural Compassion, that an infinitely wise God hath planted into our Hearts, for excellent Ends and Purposes; the *Christian* must rise higher, he must practise the Duties of Morality, not only because they are agreeable to Reason, for the Advantage of human Society, and grateful to himself, but also from a Principle of Faith and Love, a religious Regard to the Authority of God, his Maker and Redeemer, and a single Eye to the Glory of the one and Honour of the other, and thus moral Virtues become *Christian Graces*, well-pleasing thro' Jesus Christ, in the Sight of God, a splendid Ornament to our Profession, the Fruits of Faith, and profitable to Men. *Titus iii. 8. This is a faithful Saying, and these Things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God, might be*

careful to maintain good Works; these Things are good and profitable unto Men.

As I can't look on the Preaching of Duties, that the Moral Law enjoyns, to be *legal*, far less can I conceive, the urging of *Faith* and *Repentance* to be *legal*, for I look on neither to be legal Duties; the first *Dispensation* of God towards Man, spoke not one Syllable about them, they were inconsistent with the Frame of the Covenant of Works, and the Circumstances of an innocent Man, tho' it be owned that by the primary Dictate of the Law of Nature, *Man was obliged to do whatever God should demand, and believe whatever he should reveal*; yet by the Law of Creation, he could never be bound to do or believe, what was inconsistent with the State and Circumstances wherein God himself had placed him. Angels before they fell were no less under that *fundamental Law* of Nature than we, and so are the Saints in Heaven, and yet I suppose no Body will say, that they are obliged to believe in Christ, and repent that their Sins may be forgiven; what then can be the Reason that we, and not the fallen Angels, are under an Obligation to both? 'Tis plainly this, we are brought under a new Dispensation of Grace and Mercy, while they are irrevocably doomed to Destruction, tho' then it may be owned, that particular Obligations flow from that general Law, we must be rational Beings before we can be capable of any moral Obligation, and our being rational Creatures obliges us in every State we can possibly be in, to do what the Sovereign of Heaven and Earth commands, and to believe what he reveals, in Consistency with the State wherein he places us. Saints in Heaven, tho' they be under that primary Law

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of Nature still, yet they can never be obliged to believe and repent that their Sins may be forgiven them, for 'tis a Contradiction to their State; the same holds, with respect to innocent Adam. The *Obligation* then to repent and believe, arises from the new Dispensation or Covenant God has been mercifully pleased to make with us. *Faith* and *Repentance* are to be referred immediately to it, and only in a very remote Sense to the primary Law of Nature. If you consider the Law, under the Formality of a *Covenant* that God made with an innocent Man, (as I have said) *Faith* and *Repentance* are inconsistent with the Frame of the Covenant; it demanded perfect personal Obedience, and threatned Death, without Mercy, upon the least Transgression, it required that Man should continue in a State of Innocency, and need neither a Mediator, *Faith* in him, nor *Repentance* towards God; how unreasonable must it be then, to charge any with *Legalism*, for insisting upon Duties that are purely and properly *Evangelical*?

The *Antinomians*, who have peculiar Notions of free Grace, exclaim against preaching *Faith* and *Repentance* as necessary to *Forgiveness*; they talk senselessly of Christ's *repenting* and *believing* for us, and of our being justified before we do either. I am not surpris'd to find Men of these Principles, that in my Opinion, sap the Foundations of Piety, declared Enemies against the orthodox Doctrine of *Faith* and *Repentance*, but 'tis astonishing to find some who profess an Abhorrence of them, charging with *Legalism*, all such who maintain the Necessity of *Repentance* in order to the *Forgiveness* of Sin, tho' they plainly declare that neither *Faith* nor *Repentance* are our justifying Righte-

ousness before God, and that tho' they be our *Acts*; and *in us*, yet they are wrought by the Spirit of God; tho' both these are asserted in the strongest Terms, yet if they won't own that Faith goes before Repentance, and that Repentance is not necessary to Forgiveness, they must be branded with *Legalism*.

The longer I live in the World the less fond am I of that Divinity that stands upon Quirks and Subtilties; what should drive us upon determining dogmatically, whether Faith or Repentance goes first? What valuable Ends or Purposes in Religion can it serve to promote? What Edification can it give to an Audience, to dispute learnedly about a Point of this Nature? We may discover the Sharpness of our Wits, and our profound Skill in the Metaphysicks, (thin Food for a Soul to feed upon) we may set our Hearers a-gog by insisting upon what they can't well understand, and acquire to our selves the Reputation of learned Clerks, and nimble Disputants, but I suspect very much, that a Question of this Nature, is one of these that genders Strife and not godly Edifying, and therefore should be intirely dropt, or at least left to the Schools, where they may fight it out *pro* and *con* as long as they please. Ah! will we never cease to corrupt the venerable Simplicity and Plainness of the Gospel by the Subtilties of the Schools, and to blend our Theology with *Scholastick Quiddities*? Must we go thro' a *System of Logicks* and *Metaphysicks*, thumb over *Suarez*, *Ariaga*, *Oviedo*, *Scotus* and *Thomas* before we can know our *Creed*? Hard Fate to poor Christians! who have neither Leisure nor Capacity to penetrate into the Depth of the Metaphysicks. I can't but heartily approve what

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what Mr. Robert Blair, an eminent Light of this Church now in Glory, said upon the Question in hand. "He told his People from the Pulpit, that "it was a very needless one, 'tis just (said he) "as if you should ask me, when we are to walk, "which Foot we should lift first, if we would "walk to Purpose, we must make use of both "Limbs, and so dispatched the thorny Question". I wish we may all imitate the Wisdom of that great and good Man; is it not sufficient for us to declare that both are necessary, without determining the nice Point of *Priority* and *Posteriority*? We own that the one does not go before the other in order of Time, what have we to do then, but to tell our Hearers, that a Man can't be a true Penitent, without being a sound Believer, and contrariwise? that Faith and Repentance are so interwoven the one with the other, that they can't be parted, that both are necessary, the one, as the great *Instrument* of our Justification, the other, as a *necessary Qualification* in the Person to be justified, and that as there can be no true Gospel-repentance without saving Faith, so 'tis impossible for an impenitent Sinner to be a sound Believer.

Tho' I suppose a dogmatical Decision upon this Question to be very useless, yet I'm of the Mind that it is of bad Consequence to hold, *that Repentance is not necessary in order to our Forgiveness*. This Opinion has the common Sense and Understanding of Mankind against it, the sacred Oracles flying in its Face, and our Standard condemning it.

The Placableness of the divine Nature, is a Notion that has universally obtained, whether it

came from Mens natural Notions, Revelation, or Tradition, is not my Business to determine in this Place, 'tis true in Fact, that Men in all Ages have looked upon the *divine Being*, to be of a merciful Disposition. This lay at the Bottom of all Religion, for had Men looked on God as inexorable, they would no more have paid divine Worship to him, than the Devils in Hell. All Religion, true or false, is built on this Foundation, that God is of a merciful Nature and may be reconciled to Men. Tho' indeed the Light of Nature by its utmost Improvement, could not discover the Way and Manner how; this is intirely owing to Revelation.

The Light of Nature may teach us that Repentance is our Duty: If we are to love the supreme Being with all our Souls, Hearts and Minds, it can't but be our Duty to be heartily grieved when we offend him, and resolve to do so no more. Reason indeed can't assure us, that we shall obtain Forgiveness upon Repentance, the furthest it can go, is a mere *may be*, 'tis the Promise of God which is an *Act* of his sovereign and free Grace, that puts it beyond all Doubt and Controversy.

If we consult the innermost Sentiments of our own Souls, they'll inform us, that we can't in Reason expect, that the Sovereign of Heaven and Earth will indemnify our Crimes, while with unrelenting Hearts, we go on insulting his Laws and Government. I know no Set of Men who carry their Notions of God's Mercy higher than the *Socinians*; they do it upon a very impious Design, to strike at the Satisfaction of our blessed Redeemer, which is the Foundation of all our Hopes, and the Glory of our Religion: Yet such is the Force

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of Truth, that for all their Notions of Mercy, they must own, that God can't pardon and forgive the Impenitent. Their Friends, the *Deists*, raise their Notions of Mercy very high, from the same wicked View, they are not for a Religion (as one of them tells us) that has *Saviours* and *Sacrifices*, but yet they are forc'd by the Evidence of Truth, to own, that Repentance is necessary to Forgiveness. So far as my small Reading goes, I know none, but the *Antinomians*, who peremptorily declare, that God pardons the Impenitent, or, which is all one, that Repentance is not necessary in order to Forgiveness.

The common Sense of Mankind flies in the Face of this Opinion, it is inconsistent with all the Notions we can frame of God's Government over Mankind; we acknowledge him to be the wise Rector and Governor of the World, it can't stand with the Wisdom of his Government, to dispense his Pardons to impenitent Wretches, who go on, affronting his Laws; what wise Governor will give an Indemnity to a Rebel who holds a Dagger in his Hand to strike to the very Heart of him that gives it? If he has Power to support his Authority, he'll let Justice take Place upon those whom Mercy it self cannot reclaim.

Do not all wise Governors take such a Way to pardon Criminals, as may secure the Government from Contempt, and prevent Mens breaking in upon the Laws, in hopes of an easy and cheap Indemnity? What can be a stronger Temptation to transgress the Laws of God, than to tell Men, that he is of such an easy and indulgent Nature as to forgive the most stubborn Rebels; to forgive them tho' they go on with unrelenting Hearts, in the

the Contempt of his Person, Laws and Government, and that they need not be at the Trouble of one relenting Thought, in order to Forgiveness: This seems to give ample Encouragement to Men, to continue in their wicked Courses.

No wise Government lavishes out its Favours promiscuously, without regard to Friend or Foe, it will not bestow its greatest Blessings upon its greatest Enemies, nor put its Friends and Foes upon the same very Level; shall God, who is *Wisdom* it self, in the Government of Mankind, make no Distinction between hard-hearted Wretches and penitent Souls? Must the one be indemnified, who insolently affronts his Maker, as well as the other, who repents with Indignation, Grief and Sorrow the Crimes committed against God, and is willing to return to his dutiful Allegiance to his rightful Sovereign? A Government which makes no Discrimination in dispensing its Favours, is certainly a very foolish one.

Goodness and Mercy it self can't forgive the Impenitent, for it is not a fond Inclination in God to pity without Distinction, 'tis always regulated by unerring Wisdom, in distributing its Favours to Mankind. Tho' Mercy entirely excludes *Merit*, yet being under the Government of Wisdom, the Object of it must be duly qualified, that it may vent it self in a Consistency with Wisdom and the other Perfections of God. Now an hard-hearted and impenitent Wretch, is not qualified for receiving an Indemnity, and Mercy it self won't pardon. If Mercy is to be exercised, the Penitent and not the Impenitent are qualified Objects for it.

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God is infinitely holy and pure; if he forgive us, it must be in such a Way as discovers how much he hates and abhors our Sins, that we may not think him indifferent whether we transgress his Laws or not. If he pardon without the least Regard to *Penitency* or *Impenitency*, how does his Hatred against Sin appear? What becomes of his immaculate Holiness which is the brightest Diadem in the Crown of Heaven? It will be, I know, said, that his Holiness and Justice both are marvellously displayed, in that he doth not forgive without a previous Satisfaction, by no less Sacrifice, than that of his beloved Son. I do freely own, that all the divine Perfections shine with a peculiar Lustre and Glory, in the Method that he has fallen upon to pardon and save us. A Sin-pardoning God appears as *dreadful*, as he is *amiable*, he guards a Throne of Mercy with the flaming Sword of Justice, and frightens us from Sin when he is most merciful to forgive us. The Beauties of his Holiness, the Treasures of his Wisdom, the amazing Terrors of his Justice, appear in their brightest Lustre, in the glorious Triumphs of his Mercy, in saving the Miserable. This is the peculiar *Glory* of the *Christian Religion*, that no other Religion has the remotest Pretence to, it discovers to us how God may forgive us without the least Reflection on his Wisdom, Holiness, Justice, Truth and Faithfulness. The Demands of Holiness and Justice are answered to the full, and their Rights secured, when Mercy is magnified in pardoning the Guilty. But now he who asserts, that not only must a plenary Satisfaction be made to Justice, but also that we must be true Penitents, ere pardoning Mercy can be vented to us, gives us higher Notions of the

the untainted Purity and Holiness of God, than he who maintains, that no more is necessary to Forgiveness, than a previous Satisfaction. The first tells us, such is God's Indignation and Hatred against Sin, that tho' his own dear Son hath satisfied fully, yet he will not forgive us, till we ourselves hate that abominable Thing, and resent the Affront done to his Laws and Government. God, in his infinite Wisdom, has thought fit to suspend our Forgiveness, upon Repentance, that he may the more effectually prevent our Return to our Sins. Sin at first gain'd Ground by the Allurement of Pleasure, *Gen. iii. 6. When the Woman saw that the Tree was good, &c.* It maintains its Reign over us, by the same enticing Bait. God when he pardons, makes the Sinner feel by painful Sensations, what an evil and bitter Thing it is to depart from him: By the Throws and Pangs of Repentance he embitters our sweet Morsels to us, that we may lothe them as much as ever we liked them, and no more return to Folly. *Children that are burnt, dread the Fire.*

We may think our Reasonings from the divine Government are not sure and certain, for there are Depths in it that we can no more fathom, than Children can penetrate into the Maxims of the wisest Statesmen and Politicians. We may fancy a great many Incongruities, where there are none at all, and that a thousand Things are wrong, that are exactly right, agreeable to infinite Holiness, Justice and Goodness. I shall, without the least Scruple, own, that the safest Way of Reasoning about God and his Dispensations, is taken from the Revelation, that he who understands his own Nature, and the Methods of his Government, has been

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been mercifully pleased to give unto us; let us therefore enquire into the *sacred Oracles*, and we shall find that *Repentance* is declared necessary in order to *Forgiveness*: I may quote a great many Places, but I shall name only a few, *Acts* iii. 19. *Repent that your Sins may be blotted out.* It seems pretty plain from this Passage, that we must repent before our Sins can be forgiven us, for Repentance is urged on us, that they may be blotted out, which the Apostle could not have done, if Repentance followed, and did not precede Forgiveness. He behoved to have said, God blots out your Sins, that you may repent, but you must not repent, that they may be blotted out: Beware of entertaining any such Notion, it is entirely *legal*, inconsistent with a Gospel Strain. I leave it to the common Understanding of Mankind, to judge, if a Duty is urged on us by a Promise of obtaining a great and valuable Blessing on the Performance, whether the *Duty* or *Blessing* must go first? If I should promise a Thing of great Worth to another, upon his doing what I demand, would not common Sense tell us, that he must do what is required, before he can obtain it? Seeing God therefore enforces Repentance, by a Promise of Forgiveness, can we imagine that he'll forgive us before we repent? if we would for a little lay aside Prejudice, and consult common Sense, I don't doubt, but we would be forced to acknowledge, that Repentance is necessary in order to Forgiveness. *Acts* v. 31. we are told, that *Christ is an exalted Prince and Saviour to give Repentance and Forgiveness of Sins.* No, (say some) the Apostle is a little inaccurate, in not ranking Things in their due Order; if he had considered the Nature of Things, he would have said,
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Christ is an exalted Prince to give Forgiveness. The Apostle, it seems, was not vers'd in the Rules of the Schools, and hath put Things out of their right Order, a little Acquaintance with them would have corrected the Inaccuracy of his Method, and placed Remission where Repentance stands, and Repentance where Remission stands. The Apostle John in his first Epistle, 1 Chap. 9 Ver. informs us, *That if we confess our Sins, God is just and faithful to forgive us our Sins.* I hope then, Repentance (which is here describ'd by confessing) is necessary to Pardon, especially when we are peremptorily told, *That except we repent, we shall perish, Luke xiii. 3.* and, *That he who confesseth and forsaketh his Sins, shall find Mercy, Prov. xxviii. 13.* Repent and be baptized for the Remission of Sins, Acts ii. 38. And we see from Luke xxiv. 47. that the Order to be followed in preaching the Gospel, is, *That Repentance and Remission of Sin should be preached in his Name among all Nations.* Isa. lv. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and turn to the Lord, and he will have Mercy, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Ezek. xviii. 30. *Repent and turn your selves from all your Transgressions, so Iniquity shall not be your Ruin.* You will not find from the Beginning of the Bible, to the End of it, one Promise of Forgiveness made to the impenitent Man.

I would fain know, how the Thing I contend for could have been more clearly express'd: By the same Arts that some take to evade the Force of these Passages, a Man of Wit and Subtilty, may undertake to explain away the Sense of the plainest Texts of Scripture. We justly exclaim against the Socinians for torturing the Oracles of God, and fore-

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forcing a Sense out of them, by all the Quirks of Wit and Arts of Criticism, that the plain and obvious Meaning lies in the Face of. How can they be innocent, who offer manifest Force and Violence to these Texts that are adduc'd to prove, *That we must repent, that our Sins may be forgiven.* 'Tis no good Service to the holy Scriptures, to make a *Nose of Wax* of them, and by senseless Distinctions, to distinguish away the plain, literal and obvious Meaning of them. They were written for the Benefit of the learned and unlearned, and without all Controversy, the plain and obvious Sense, that lies level to the Capacity of the illiterate Peasant, as well as the profound School-doctor, is to be embrac'd.

It would raise Indignation in a very cool and calm Temper, to find Scripture and Sense both miserably affronted by senseless Distinctions. Men may shew the Quaintness of their Wit as much as they please, in the Use of them; but one plain Text of Scripture against an Opinion, will have more Weight with all sober Christians, who have not lost their Understanding in the Wilderness of scholastick Niceties, than a whole Cart-load of strained Criticisms, and frivolous Distinctions. I always entertain a Jealousy of the Sense of a Text, that needs a great deal of Scholar-craft to make it out to me, I suspect, that either it is not the genuine Meaning, or if it be, that I may be very safely ignorant of it, without Danger to my Soul.

When the Scripture is so plain, that *we must repent, that our Sins may be blotted out*, what but a fond Affection to an Hypothesis, can make Men oppose it? Reason and Scripture both make for it. I can never think it consistent with God's

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Perfections to pardon the Impenitent, for whom he forgives, he loves with a Love of Complacency and Delight. How is it consistent with his Perfections, to delight in an impenitent Wretch, who has an Heart full of Enmity against God his Maker and Sovereign, a Love of good Will he may bear to him, but not a Love of Complacency.

If we consult our Standard, we'll find, that in a Consistency with Scripture, *Repentance is declared necessary in order to Forgiveness*. Confess. Chap. 15. § 1. "Repentance unto Life, is an Evangelick Grace, the Doctrine whereof is to be preach'd by every Minister of the Gospel, as well as that of Faith in Christ". We see that the *Westminster Divines* were of a different Sentiment from the *Arminians*, who name them *legal Preachers*, who call Sinners to Repentance. § 3. "Altho' Repentance be not to be rested in, as any Satisfaction for Sin ——— yet it is of such Necessity to all Sinners, that none may expect Pardon without it". Words (I think) cannot more plainly hold out the Precedency of Repentance, 'tis declared necessary to Forgiveness, and if it be so, it must go in Order of Nature at least before it.

Some think to escape by a Distinction betwixt *legal and Gospel Repentance*: The first (say they) goes before Pardon, but not the second. Whatever Use there may be for this Distinction, it will do 'em no Service here; for 'tis plain from the Title of the Chap. in our Confess. that it is not *legal Fits of Terror* that a Man may have, and yet perish, which are spoke of, but *Repentance unto Life*, that has Forgiveness necessarily connected with it, which *legal Repentance* has not the least Claim to; 'tis this

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Gospel Repentance, that is of such Necessity, that no Sinner can expect Forgiveness without it.

I shall produce here the Testimony of three eminent Divines, very pat. to this Purpose. The learned and judicious *Durham*, in his Commentary upon the *Revelation*. Chap: 3. Page 156. strongly asserts and proves, that Gospel Repentance is necessary not only as a Duty laid on by God, but also as a Mean appointed for attaining Remission of Sins. *Hutchison* upon *Psalms* 130. Page 159. "No Man is actually pardon'd, till he come to Christ, till he be actually penitent, and a Believer, he is not actually pardon'd. Page 164. There is no Pardon of Sin, but upon Repentance. *Acts* v. 31. Where God gives Remission, he first gives Repentance. *Dr. Owen* on Justification, Page 105. "There is indeed a Repentance, which accompanieth Faith, and is included in the Nature of it, at least radically; this is required unto our Justification, but that legal Repentance which precedes Gospel Faith, and is without it, is neither a Disposition, Preparation, nor Condition of our Justification. Page 100. "Justifying Faith includeth in its Nature, the entire Principle of Evangelick Repentance, so as that 'tis utterly impossible, that a Man should be, a true Believer, and not at the same Instant of Time be truly penitent.

There are several Things that give rise to Mistakes upon the Question in hand, such as, (1.) The not observing, that tho' Faith alone justifies, this is its peculiar Office, and it has an Aptitude or Fitness for it) yet, that Faith is never alone, but always attended with Repentance, its inseparable Companion. (2.) The not observing, that tho'

tho' the assenting Act of Faith must be considered in order before Repentance, (for it is not possible for a Sinner to repent, who believes not the Promises of Grace and Salvation thro' Christ, and has not some Apprehension of obtaining Mercy thro' his Blood) yet the receiving of Christ held forth in the Promises, the Soul's Acquiescence in the Device of Salvation, and Reliance on Jesus that he may get it, is never without Repentance; for how can a Man flee to Jesus for Pardon, who has not a Sense of his lost and undone Condition, is not willing to be eased of his Load of Guilt, and resolved to have no more to do with Sin? This every Sinner must of Necessity have, who receives Christ, as he is offered in the Gospel. (3.) The not considering the Difference that there is betwixt Repentance, which flows from a Sense of the Love of God in Christ, and that which arises from an Apprehension of obtaining Mercy thro' him. The *Antinomians* imagine, that there can be no Gospel-repentance, but that which flows from Assurance of the Love of God. This is certainly a gross Mistake, and gives very cold Comfort to many serious Believers, who are true Penitents, and yet come not the length of Assurance. A Repentance which flows from Assurance, is without all Controversy posterior to Faith and Forgiveness. But then it is not the only Repentance that is Evangelical; there may be, and is a Repentance unto Life, arising from the Apprehension of Mercy, where Assurance is wanting, and this we have described to us in our shorter Catechism, *Quest. 87* and goes in order of Nature before Forgiveness. The Repentance which flows from Assurance, is that which a Sinner hath, for offending the God whom

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whom he knows to be his merciful Father in Christ, his best Friend, and greatest Benefactor. The Repentance which we have described in our Catechism, is such as flows from the Apprehension the Sinner has, that God may be merciful through Christ, tho' he can't say that he is his reconciled Father thro' Jesus, and therefore he believes and repents, repents and believes, that his Sins may be blotted out, and that he may be admitted into a State of Favour and Reconciliation with God thro' Jesus. The one repents, because he knows that much is forgiven him; the other, that he may be forgiven. (4.) The not observing, that Repentance unto Life, that is necessary to Forgiveness, does not actually include in it holy Obedience, for this is the Fruit of Faith and Gospel-repentance, it implies indeed in it a Resolution to have no more to do with our Sins, and to walk in all holy Obedience, as our Catechism explains it; but now it can't be inferred, that because we hold this necessary to Forgiveness, that therefore Obedience is necessary to a Sinner's Justification in God's Sight. Faith in Christ is the alone Instrument of our Justification. A Resolution to have no more to do with Sin, arising from a Grief and Hatred of it, and an Apprehension of Mercy, and a Purpose of new Obedience, are Qualifications in the Person that is to be justified. A holy Life in Conformity to the Commands of God, springs from Faith and Repentance, as Branches from the Root; when they are true and genuine, they won't fail to produce the Fruits of Righteousness and Holiness in the Life, that are necessary to Salvation. (5.) Wrong Notions about the *Freedom of Grace*, are a plentiful Source of Mistakes in the *Antinomians*

mians and others. They think free Grace excludes all Qualifications in us, even tho' wrought by the Spirit of God, and therefore will neither have Faith nor Repentance necessary to our Forgiveness, nor Holiness to our eternal Happiness. They warmly exclaim against all Qualifications as subversive of the Freedom of Grace, and under the specious Colour of exalting Christ and Grace, undermine Holiness and Duty. For this Reason the learned and pious *Rutherford*, says in a Sermon he had before the House of Commons, upon *Dan. vi. 26 Anno 1643. The Antinomian is the golden white Devil, a Spirit of Hell clothed with all Heaven and the Notions of free Grace.* By this Artifice, both in *Old and New England*, they imposed upon well-meaning People, whose Hearts were much better than their Heads.

Tho' free Grace intirely excludes Merit, and all Qualifications in us, produced by the Power of our natural Abilities, or *common Grace*, as the *Arminians* talk, yet it does not exclude gracious Qualifications, wrought in us by the Spirit of Christ. God hath established an Order for conveying the Blessings of a Redeemer's Purchase, Pardon is suspended on our Faith and Repentance, eternal Life on our Sanctification; if we are not Believers and penitent Persons, we are not qualified according to the Gospel-promise for receiving the Remission of our Sins. If we be not holy, we cannot see the Face of God in Mercy. These Qualifications we must have, according to the wise Order established by God; these he works in us by his Spirit, and they are every way consistent with the Freedom of his Grace.

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As I can't see *Legalism* in preaching Christian Morality, as I have explained it, nor in insisting on Faith and Repentance as necessary to Forgiveness; neither can I perceive it, in asserting that a Believer should act both *from* Life and *for* Life. Some maintain that the Believer is to act *from* Life, but by no Means *for* Life, this smells rankly of *Legalism*, say they.

I find the *Antinomians* harping very much upon this String. Others are extremely pleased with the Musick of it, and play the same Spring over again. For my Part, I do not perceive the Charms that are in it, if they ly not in the Words *for* and *from*. This it seems makes a pleasant Sound, but I am so very unmusical, that I can't be taken with such melodious Gingle.

That a Believer is to act *from* Life, is what no Body will deny, he has Christ formed in him, and by his Union with Jesus, is made a Partaker of the divine Nature, all he does should flow from a vital Principle within; our Motions in Religion, that don't proceed from the Life of God in our Souls, are little better than the Motions of a Puppet in a Play. But now, what should hinder a Believer who acts *from* Life, to act *for* Life? Is not eternal Life set before him, to encourage him in his Motions? *Rom. ii. 6; 7. I. Cor. ix. 24. Did not Jesus Christ endure the Cross, and despise the Shame, for the Joy that was set before him? Heb. xii. 2.* Why may not a Believer then, eye eternal Life to encourage him in a patient Continuance in well-doing? If this be the Meaning of acting *for* Life, 'tis what God allows; tho' we are not to imagine, that our doing merits Life, or founds our Claim and Title to it, yet 'tis the Way to the Kingdom,

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and we may keep our Eye fixed upon the glorious Recompence of Reward, to animate our Pursuits.

Near a Kin to this Opinion is another, *namely*, That the Believer must neither be moved with the Hopes of Heaven or Fears of Hell, but serve God with a pure and disinterested Love. This is *Mysticism* in its Height. I find, that the Heathens had their Mysticks. *Epicurus*, who shut up God as a Recluse in Heaven, wrapt up in his own Bliss and Felicity, without intermeddling with Affairs below, was pretty far gone in *Mysticism*; he placed Religion in the Contemplation of that most perfect and blessed Being, and the Veneration of the Deity, and asserted, that Men, without being moved either with Hopes or Fears, should venerate the most perfect and blessed Being. The rest of the Philosophers, especially the *Stoicks*, pelted him and his Followers, as consummate *Atheists*. They saw thro' the Finenesses of his Piety, and looked on it (as indeed it was) as a Mine that blew up all Religion, when he would have Men to pay Homage to a Deity, without expecting Benefit by him, or Evil from him.

The *Jews* had their Mysticks: The Founder of the Sect of the *Sadducees*, taught his Scholars that they should serve God out of pure Love, without Hope of Reward, or Fear of Punishment. His Disciples carried the Point further than their Master designed; they maintained, that there was no Life after this, nothing to work on our Hopes or Fears, and so degenerated into *Atheists*, or at least confined all the Good and Evil of Religion to a present Life.

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The *Papists* have their Mysticks in vast Swarms, especially among the contemplative *Monks*, who have Time and Leisure to make pretty Romances, and to spin a Religion out of their own Fancy, that has no Foundation in the sacred Oracles.

There are Mysticks amongst *Protestants* of all Denominations, but I believe the *Antinomians* are as far gone this Way as any, the Scheme which they embrace naturally leads them to it, they strike the Moral Law out of their System of Religion, and will have Believers under no Obligation to obey it, neither to regard its Promises, nor to be awed with its Threats, they make the Covenant of Grace *unconditionate*, and the Gospel a *Bundle of absolute Promises*, and place the Life and Soul of their Religion, in a *confident Perswasion*, that *Christ has done all for them, and that they shall have Life and Salvation thro' him*. There is a terrible Objection that lies against this Scheme, that is sufficient to blast the Credit of it, with all who have any Concern for practical Piety, and 'tis this, *That it opens a Door to a lewd and licentious Life*. If the Moral Law is to be discarded, as an old Almanack out of Date, if Believers are neither to be awed with Threats, nor moved by Promises, they may live as they list; what is there left to engage them to Holiness in all manner of Life and Conversation? To ward off this Blow, and to make their Sentiments appear as white and innocent as an Angel of Light, they tell you, that the Believer has a living Law within, *the Law of Love*, and does his Duty from pure and disinterested Love, without being bribed by his Hopes, or cudgelled by his Fears, he is not of a mercenary Disposition, needs not the Crutches of Promises

and Threats, Love, pure disinterested Love, is all in all to him; he serves God without Hopes of Reward, Fears of Punishment, and is not of such a legal Spirit, as to be moved by either of them.

We have Reason to bless God, that our Bible gives us other Notions of Religion, 'tis a Stranger to the mystical Refinements, which are indeed *Romance Divinity*. A very superficial View of the Oracles of God, will convince us, that we are to be awed with the Threatnings, and moved with the gracious Promises God has given us, Luke xiii. 3. *Except we repent we'll perish*, Matth. x. 28. *Fear not him who can kill the Body*, &c. Heb. iv. 1. *Let us therefore fear, lest a Promise being made*, &c. Phil. ii. 12. *Work out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling*. Heb. x. 38. *If any Man draw back*, &c. Rom. ii. 6 — 11. Phil. iii. 14. *I press forward towards the Mark, for the Prize*, &c. Matth. xi. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that are weary*, &c. I. Tim. iv. 8. *But Godliness is profitable unto all Things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come*. I. Tim. vi. 17. *Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be not high-minded*, &c. Ver. 19. *Laying up in Store for themselves a good Foundation against the Time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal Life*. Rom. viii. 13. *For if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die? but if thro' the Spirit, ye mortifie the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live*. From these Passages, and many more that might be adduced, 'tis very plain, that God has set Promises and Threatnings before us to work on our Hopes and Fears, and how can we be blamed for taking Encouragement from the Promises, to our Duty, and for being deterred, by the Threatnings from all Sin? If there be any Fault in it, it must be charged on the Author

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thor of our Religion; which is horrid Blasphemy to assert.

The great Author of our Being, hath implanted into our Nature, a Principle of Self-preservation, and laid it into our very Make and Constitution, for excellent Purposes, that we may flee from these Things that threaten our Destruction, and pursue after the Things that tend to our Happiness and Well-being. He who made us, deals with us in a way agreeable to our Make and Frame, he sets everlasting Life before us, to encourage and animate our Hopes, that we may pursue after it with the greatest Vigour, he denounces the most dreadful Threatnings on the Workers of Iniquity, to prevent their breaking in upon his holy Law. The Promises and Threatnings are the Fences of it, and if these Guards and Fences be pulled down and removed, his Law is left naked and defenceless, and Men will make no Bones of trampling it under their Feet.

Believers, I shall own, are of a more generous Disposition than the Wicked of the World, but for all that, they need both Promises and Threatnings to work upon them. *Adam* in a State of Innocency, I don't doubt, was of as noble a Spirit, as Believers now are, who have such a dead Weight of Corruption in them; he had a more pure and disinterested Love to God, than they in this State of Sin and Imperfection, can pretend to, yet God saw it needful to enforce his Obedience, with the Promise of Life, and guard his Law with the Threatning of Death, and if he saw it needful in a State of Innocency, why should we imagine that he has stript his Law of Promises and Threatnings to Believers, who while on Earth are in a State of

of Imperfection, and need all the Helps imaginable to beat down the Corruption that is in them, and prevent their transgressing God's holy, just and good Law?

Were Believers in Heaven, Love would be all in all, but as long as they are on Earth, their Hopes, their Fears, their Love must be wrought on; Corruption within needs all the Restraints that an infinitely wise God has laid on it, to tame and subdue it, and it is their Happiness, if all these taken together, keep them at a Distance from Sin, and engage them to Holiness in all Manner of Conversation. There is an infinite Variety in the Tempers of Men, as great, perhaps, as in the Lineaments of their Faces, some are more wrought on by one Argument, some by another, and an infinitely wise God makes use of Motives, that hit the several Dispositions of Men. Let not Men pretend to be wiser than God, in striking off all the Arguments he sets before us in our Bibles, but *one* taken from Love,

It would not be amiss to consider, that Heaven and Earth are two very different States, and that the Theology above, which excludes all *Faith*, all *Fear*, all *Hope*, is not calculated for Men on Earth, who walk by *Faith*, are animated by their *Hopes*, and wrought on by *Fear* and *Love*, Mystical Refinements upon Religion, turn it into a mere *Skeleton*, and take away its *Nerves* and *Sinews*, *sectantem levius nervi deficiunt animique*. By polishing too fine, we pare off the very Substance of it, and destroy its Life and Vigour; we make it evaporate into airy fanciful Notions, that are pretty enough in the Theory, but impracticable, considering our Make and Frame, and the Cir-

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Circumstances we are placed in, while we live in this World.

I know, that Men set up for these Refinements, under a Pretence of more exalted Piety, and sublime Devotion, than what is common and ordinary. They are not for being mercenary in the Service of God, nor in the least Degree selfish, they exclaim against *Self-love*, as the Source of all Wick- edness, and the impure Fountain, that feeds all the Streams of Corruption, that have been, are, or will be in the World ; they look on it as *all Sin*, summ'd up in one Word, and particular *Vices*, as *Self-love* diversified, that gets different Names from the Objects 'tis employed about, as the same Ocean hath different Denominations from the Shores it washes.

I am not ignorant, how the World has been im- posed on and abused, by high Pretences to a more than ordinary sublime Devotion. To go out of the common and beaten Road, and advance some singular Notions, that have an high Strain of Spi- rituality, and carry Airs of the greatest *Self-de- nial* and *Mortification*, is a very sly and subtil Way of getting a Name, and finding Followers amongst them who *admire* most what they least *understand*. 'Tis by this Artifice, that the Founders of the several Orders among the *Papists*, couzen the World, and get a Name to themselves of wonderful *Devotoes*, and by the like little Arts, many impose upon the Credulity of simple and well-meaning Persons, who have not Penetration enough to see thro' their thin Disguises. Their *out of the way Sallies*, are merely Flights of Fancy, without the least Foundation in the holy Writings.

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The wise Man, *Eccles. vii. 16.* forbids us to be righteous over much. We would do well, not to strain and refine upon Religion, beyond what's written in the sacred Oracles; from which we are to fetch all our religious Sentiments. If once we give up our selves to the Conduct of Fancy and Imagination, we know not where we will land, for there is no End of Fancy, that blind Guide, which will lead us into the Ditch, and there leave us, *Abraham* and *Moses* were as little mercenary in their Tempers, as our modern Refiners, and yet the one forsook his native Country, from a Regard to the Command of God, and the Prospect of a heavenly Country, *Heb. xi. 8, 16.* The other endured, as seeing him who is invisible, for he had Respect to the Recompence of Reward, *Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26, 27.* If we think that they were old Testament Saints, who were not acted by such noble Principles, as new Testament Believers, let us then come to the new Dispensation, and we'll find, that the Apostle *Paul* pressed forward towards the Mark for the Prize of th high Calling of God in Christ, *Phil. iii. 14.* He and other Christians, under all the Calamities of an evil World, had their Eye fix'd upon the Glory to come, *II. Cor. iv. 17, 18.* For our light Affliction which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, while we look not at the Things which are seen, but at the Things which are not seen, &c. One greater than *Abraham*, *Moses*, or all the Old and New Testament Saints, our blessed Saviour, for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, *Heb. xii. 2.* Let us never hear, after such bright and illustrious Examples, that 'tis mercenary to eye the Happiness that is to come; if any should look on't

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on't and expect it as Wages due to them for the intrinsic Worth of their good Works, this would be mercenary with a Witness; but to expect it of free Grace, for the sake of a blessed Redeemer, to eye it as our Encouragement in our Way, this is far from being mercenary, if it be, it is such as I am sure the Scripture commands.

I shall not grudge to own, that there is a *Self-love* that we can't give ill enough Names to, a *vitious Self-love*, the *Parent* of all *Mischief*, which we are daily to mortify and subdue. *Matth. xvi. 24. If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me.* Self is the Centre of all we do, we love our selves more than God, and hate or love Things more or less, as they stand in relation to *Self*; to this *Idol* do we bow and pay Homage, and stick not to break thro' the Laws of God and Man too, to gratify it. They are very great Strangers at Home, who do not find the mighty Force of *Self-love* in them; they are yet to begin to learn serious Religion, who never gron'd under its Tyranny, and don't bitterly bewail the Sallies of it, and the squint Looks that are given to it. 'Twas the Prayer of an eminent Saint, *Good Lord, deliver me from my self*: All serious Souls joyn him in this Request, and long to have the Love of God perfected in them, that the Reign of *Self-love* may be destroyed. But now as there is a *vitious*, so is there a *lawful* and *regular* Self-love, God commands us to love our Neighbour as our selves, this supposes that it is our Duty to love our selves, were it an ill Thing, it would not be proposed as a Standard of our Love to others.

God has implanted into Man and all living Creatures whatsoever, a Principle of *Self-preservation*,
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and that we may take care of our Safety, he has given us an ardent Love to our selves, that's highly commendable, when it runs in a right Channel. If it makes us prefer our immortal Souls to our perishing Bodies, Eternity to Time, the Favour of God to all the Felicities of a present Life, an Interest in Jesus before all Things whatsoever, if it make us fervent in our Addresses to God for the Remission of our Sins, Purification of our Hearts, if it make us fear his Displeasure, and regard his Authority more than the Commands of Men, and the Wrath of a whole World, then 'tis far from being *sinful*, 'tis improv'd to the best Purposes, and we fall in with God's Design of planting it into our Hearts: 'Tis a *sanctified Love* to our selves that the Scripture commands.

There's in every Man a natural Desire after Happiness. *Psal. iv. 6. There be many who will say, Who will shew us any Good?* But Men thro' the Blindness of their Minds, and the Corruption of their Hearts, seek their Happiness where it can't be found, they turn from God the *all-sufficient Good*, and the only Happiness of our immortal Souls, to *broken Cisterns*, and expect that from the Creature, which he only can give, this is the *Source* of our Misery and Unhappiness, it leads us out of the right Road to Bliss, and puts us upon endless Wandrings after Happiness from created Enjoyments, that are like *Clouds without Water, and Wells without Rain*. When we fall in with the natural Inclination we have to Happiness, and seek it where it is to be found, in the Favour and Enjoyment of the *all-sufficient God*, this is certainly our Duty and Interest too; 'tis hard, extremely hard to conceive, how God should give us a *natural Desire*

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fire after Happiness, and yet not allow us to seek it where it can only be found.

An infinitely good God, in all his Precepts, Promises, Threatnings and Dispensations towards his People (next to his own Glory) consults their Happiness and Welfare, and why may not they, in a due Line of Subordination to God's Glory, pursue their own Bliss and Felicity. Would to God, that we were but so wise, as to love our selves as God commands, we would not prefer Earth to Heaven, our Bodies to our Souls, the Friendship of the World to the Favour of God, and the Gratification of our Lusts to the pleasing of our God and Redeemer. That *Self-love* which stands in Opposition to our *Love to God*, and tempts to Sin, is a fatal Engine of much Mischief, but that Love to our selves that flows from the Love of God in Christ, and prompts us to our Duty, is an happy Instrument of much Good to us.

If we cast our Eyes upon our *excellent Standard*, we will see, that Believers in their Obedience, may be mov'd with their Hopes and Fears; and that this is not servile and mercenary. *Chap. 19. Art. 6.* " So as a Man's doing Good, and refraining from Evil, because the Law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no Evidence of his being under the Law, but under Grace "

All the *Divines* that I know (except your *Mysticks*) freely own, that in the Service of God, we may have a *Regard* to our own *Happiness and Welfare*. 'Tis a Question, whether God's *Glory* or our own *Happiness* should weigh most with us? Without all Controversy, the Manifestation of God's infinite Perfections and Excellencies, is the great
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End of all he does, and should be our great End in all we do. I. Cor. x. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God:* The Creation of the World, the Works of Providence and Redemption, are *Means* subservient to his Glory; that in it self, is of more *Worth* than the Happiness of all created Beings. Tho' this be a certain Truth, yet it will not follow, that we are to have no *Regard* at all to our own Happiness. God allows it, and in his infinite Wisdom and Goodness hath twisted his own Glory and our Happiness together: So that when we seek his Glory, we seek our own Bliss and Felicity, and when we seek our own Happiness in the Way he has appointed, we seek his Glory. And we cannot well separate in our *Intention*, what God in his great Mercy hath joyn'd together.

There is another Species of *Legalism*, which I find a certain Author exclaim against, *Preface to the second Part of the Marrow*, namely "The preaching the Necessity of Holiness as a Means only in order to eternal Life". That it is a *Means*, I suppose can hardly be denied: That it is a *Means absolutely necessary*, can as little be refused; for 'tis impossible from the Nature of Things, as they stand in relation to one another, that any Man can be happy without *Holiness*. An impure Soul could find no Happiness in Heaven it self, it would be tormented, instead of being delighted with the Glories and Employments of the heavenly State. There is no *Legalism* here then, but the sagacious Author smells out the *Legalism* in preaching it only as a *Means*. I verily believe, that there was never a Minister so very void of common Sense and Understanding, as to tell his Audience, that they must con-

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conceive *Holiness* under no other View, than that of a *Means*; did any conceive it only under this precise Notion, they behoved to say, that it is not desirable for it self, but only for the End it is designed for, which I believe never one either thought or spoke. *Holiness*, *Holiness* is desirable for it self, 'tis the Glory of the divine Nature, and the Beauty and Perfection of the human; 'tis the Image of God restor'd to the Soul of Man, which makes it amiable in the Eyes of God, 'tis the Foundation of Happiness, and the Seeds of a blessed Immortality, 'tis a principal Part of a Redeemer's Purchase, and a chief Ingredient in the Felicities of Heaven. What a Happiness will it be to Believers, who grogne under a Body of Sin and Death, to be entirely delivered from it, and to have the Image of God perfected in their Souls. *Psal. xvii. 15. As for me, I will behold thy Face in Righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy Likeness.*

I can see no Fault in using all the Arguments that our Bibles set before us, in pressing *Holiness* on our selves and others. We are indeed told again and again, that it must not be urged only as a *Means*, but I am afraid that the Meaning of this is, that it must not be at all urg'd as a *Means*, and that which gives me Ground to suspect it, is, that the Author tells us, that 'tis neither *Cause*, *Title* nor *Condition* of Happiness. That it is not the *meritorious Cause*, true; that it neither founds our Claim, nor is practicable in our own Strength, as true, but that it is not a *Condition sine qua non*, without which we'll never be possess'd of Heaven: If this be the Author's Meaning, I look on it as a very loose and licentious Doctrine, contrary to plain scripture, *Heb. xii. 14. Follow Peace with all Men,*
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and Holiness without which no Man shall see the Lord. If it were not a *conditio sine qua non*, we might go to Heaven without it, and what an Heaven must that be? no better than a Mahometan Paradise, or like Noah's Ark, a Receptacle of clean and unclean, of holy Saints and impure Sinners. If it be not a *Conditio sine qua non* required of us, it can't be a *Means absolutely necessary* to our Admission into Heaven: Excellently does the judicious *Durham* speak on this Head, *Rev. Chap. 3*. "If we look to such Privileges of the Covenant of Grace, as presuppose something besides being in Covenant to antecede, v.g. entring into Life, and Admission into Glory and the like, in that Respect, Works and Holiness may be call'd the *Conditio* of Salvation, even as a Wife's Dutifulness may be call'd the Condition of attaining her Dowry."

Rutherford, Survey of *Antinom.* Part II. Page 62. "Good Works are so Conditions of Salvation, as they be Graces also". In Answer to the *Antinomian* Objection, ye make Works the Cause of Salvation. He replies, Page 62. "That it followeth not, that ye are joynt Causes with Christ, but only *Conditions*, just as a Man's journeying on Foot or Horse to a City or Kingdom, is the *Way*, *Condition* of his entring into the City; but not his *Charter* or *Law-title* to enjoy the Crown, as his Inheritance. Pag. 63. Remission of Sins is but one of the promised Mercies of the Gospel, and because it dependeth not on Works, as a *Condition* for which Life is given, as the *Antinomians* charge us, but in it unjustly. It followeth not, that they are no *Conditions* in any Sense. This is vain *Logic*; they

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“ they are not Conditions of Dependency and Causality; therefore, they are no Conditions at all ”. Pag. 64. He vindicates, Col. i. 12. from the false Gloss of the *Antinomian Town*, who saith, “ That all the Fitness spoke of by the Apostle, is in Justification. He makes it plain, that the walking worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, and being fruitful in every good Work, was Part of their Fitness also. That holy walking conferreth a Fitness and Disposition to Salvation, to me, is clear from Rev. xxi. 27. And there shall in no wise enter into it any Thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lie; But they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life ”. Rutherford, *Christ's dying and drawing Sinners*, Pag. 62. “ Holy walking as a Witness of Faith, is the Way to the Possession of the Kingdom ”.

These two famous Lights had no Scruple to name Holiness and good Works, the Condition of salvation, never any charged them with *Legalism* but the *Antinomians*, who pretended to be more *evangelick Men* than others, and nicknamed all these *legal Preachers* who fell not in with their licentious Tenets about free Grace. They will neither have Holiness to be the *Way to, the Condition of, nor Meetness for Heaven*, as the pious Rutherford observes, they are for haling us to Heaven as so many *Sticks and Blocks*, they will by no Means have us to act for Life.

The Author seems to symbolize too much with them, for (says he) the Thing I plead against, the preaching Holiness in such a *legal Strain*, doth directly or indirectly tend to lead Men to a *Doing for Life*, as if their good Deeds were their *Cause, Title, or Condition* of their Salvation.

A little after, he says, That the pressing of it, *only* under the Notion of a *Mean* or *Way*, leads the Thoughts of carnal Men into a foolish Conceit, as if Happiness were something distinct from Holiness.

He is not come the length, to deny in express Terms, that Holiness is the *Way* and *Means* of *Salvation*: This is too gross (for as licentious as we are growing) to go down with us: We are not yet sufficiently prepared for swallowing this *Aminonian* Pill. But (says he) it must not be insisted on, as a *Means* or *Way* only. In my Apprehension, what he gives with *one Hand*, he takes away with the *other*: He owns it to be a *Means*, but then, it must not be preached directly or indirectly in such a *Way* as leads Men into a *Doing for Life*. By doing *for Life*, I suppose, he means, looking on Holiness as the Condition, *Way*, or *Means* of *Life*, that it must not be practised, that we may be disposed for the heavenly Kingdom; and admitted into it; if it must not be preached *directly* or *indirectly* in such a *Strain*, as leads Men to *do*, that they may be possessors of *Life*, how can it be looked on as a *Way* or *Means* in any Sense at all? If it be a *Way*, I may walk in it, that I may enter into the heavenly Kingdom. If it be a *Means*, I may use it, that I may receive the *End of Faith and Obedience*, the *Salvation of my Soul*.

I have endeavoured to prove, that we may keep our Eye fixt on the glorious Reward, that God of his rich Grace and Mercy bestows on us through Jesus Christ, to encourage us in our *Way*, why then may I not walk in the *Way*, that I may lay hold on eternal Life? Why may I not practise Ho-
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liness as a *Means* God hath connected with Happiness, that *having my Fruit unto Holiness, the End may be eternal Life*? The *Antinomians* who will neither have Holiness to be *Way, Means, Meekness, nor Condition*, speak consistently; when they tell us that Believers should not *directly* nor *indirectly* act for Life. But to own it in any Sense to be a *Way* and *Means*, and yet to tell us that we must not *directly* nor *indirectly* act for Life, i. e. the Possession thereof does not seem to hang together.

That which further confirms me in the Opinion that the Author strikes it off intirely from being a *Means* or *Way* at all, is, what he says, "The pressing of it only under the Notion of a *Means* or *Way*, leads the Thoughts of carnal Men into a foolish Conceit, as if Happiness were something distinct from Holiness". Now I would again know if the pressing of it under the Notion of a *Means* and *Way* at all, will not lead Men to think, that 'tis something distinct from Happiness, for every Body knows that the *Way* and the *End* are different, that the *Means* and *End* are not the same Thing.

If it must not be preacht in such a *Way* as will make People look on Happiness as distinct from Holiness, it must not be preacht as a *Way* and *Means* at all, for whether we will or not, they'll look on them as distinct, and we give them Ground to do it. Our Author says that this is a foolish Conceit, but 'tis such a Conceit, as he himself must entertain, if he look on Holiness as a *Way* or a *Means* at all. If Happiness be not distinct from Holiness, they must be one and the same, and how can this be, if Holiness be a *Means* in any Sense?

Every Body who has a Notion of *Means* and *End*, knows, that the one is not the other: If *Happiness* be nothing distinct from *Holiness*, then 'tis true, that *Holiness* is nothing distinct from *Happiness*, and if it be so, how can *Happiness* be adduced as an *Argument* to press *Holiness* on us. When a Thing is urged on us by a Motive, it must be conceived as something distinct from it, else 'tis ridiculous to adduce it as a Motive. *Holiness* and *Happiness* must be considered as distinct, for in Fact they have been separated. *Adam* was perfectly holy, and yet was not in Possession of the *Happiness* promised to him in the other World. Our blessed Saviour upon the Cross was perfectly holy, and yet was not in Possession of the Joy that was set before him: And Things that have been separated in Fact, may be conceived as distinct. Perfect *Holiness* is a chief Ingredient in the Felicities of the heavenly State. It is the Foundation of our Bliss, without which it is impossible for us to be completely happy: But it is not the *whole* of the *Happiness* of Heaven. A Person may be perfectly holy, who is not perfectly happy, but he cannot be perfectly happy, without being perfectly holy.

It is the Duty of Ministers to urge *Holiness* by all the Motives and Arguments that our *Bible* set before us, let us endeavour to represent its native Charms and Beauties, that would ravish a whole World, had they their Senses exercised to discern between Good and Ill. Let us tell our Hearers, that it is a considerable Part of a Redeemer's Purchase, and urge them by all the Miracles of his redeeming Love, by all his Sweat and Agonies in the Garden and upon the Cross, to be holy in all manner of
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Life and Conversation. Let us tell them that it is the Perfection and Excellency of our Nature, a Heaven begun in our Souls, and a principal Ingredient in the Felicities of the heavenly Life, that it is the *Way* to the Kingdom, and a *Means* so absolutely necessary, that without it we cannot possibly see God. Let us guard against Subtilties that will slacken our Diligence in the Way of our Duty, let us exalt *free Grace*, and own that it must give us the Kingdom, and the Grace to walk in the Way to it, and at the same Time tell Men that they must stir up the Grace of God that is in them, and not imagine that they must behave as they were *Sticks and Stones*.

We have the more need to guard against any Thing that in our Thoughts may lessen the absolute Necessity of Holiness, when we consider the dreadful Depravation of our Nature, that greedily embraces these Doctrines that have a malignant Influence upon the Practice of Holiness, and the loose and licentious Tenets that are advanced by the *Antinomians*, under the Colour of exalting Christ and his Grace, *v. g.* "Sanctification is not one Jot of our Way to Heaven, Duty will do a Believer no good, and Sin will do him no Harm. Holiness is neither Way, Condition, Means, nor Fitness for Heaven. We are not to be touched in Conscience for Sin, nor to do any Duty because commanded in the Law, that the justified can't sin, their Adultery is no Adultery, that they are as free of indwelling Sin as Jesus Christ. *Rutherford's Survey of Antinom. Part I. Page 210.*

The Things that have occasioned Mistakes upon this Subject, are (1.) Wrong Notions of *free Grace*,

as if it were inconsistent with *Conditions*, *Qualifications*, and *Dispositions* wrought in us by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. 2dly. The running from one Extreme to another. Some set up for the *Merit* of good Works, some found our *Claim* and *Title* upon our Holiness, some exalt *Nature* and *free Will*, and think Holiness practicable by *moral Suasion*, which they honour with the Name of *common Grace*. The *Antinomians* when they flee from this Extreme run unto another, they will not have Holiness to be *conditio possessionis*, the Way to the Kingdom, *Means*, nor *Meetsness* for it.

I have been surpris'd to hear some, who carry their Pretences to Piety pretty high, say, *That they could not endure these Ministers who insisted upon nothing but do, do, do.* They looked on them as extremely legal.

I know no *Ministers*, who are either so *impious* or *ignorant*, as to drop their *Creed* and insist upon *doing*, without laying as a Foundation the *Articles* of Faith, and pressing Faith in Jesus on us as the Root of holy Obedience. I know none, who are of such an *imposing Spirit*, as to urge *doing*, without backing it with *thus saith the Lord*, I know none, who bid us *do* that we may be *justified*, tho' they urge it as necessary in order to *Salvation*. I am not acquainted with any who press *doing* in our own Strength, or don't lay Union with Christ and Regeneration, as the Foundation of an holy Life, and direct us to Jesus both for Strength to do our Duty and Acceptance in it. Tho' Ministers sometimes in pressing *Duty* should not direct their Hearers to Jesus Christ for *Strength* to perform it, and *Acceptance* in it, yet I'll be very far from charging them with *Legalism* on this Score: For they
having

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having frequently inculcated them on their Audience, I can very charitably suppose, that they take it for granted, that they will carry these along with them in their Minds, and need not therefore be told of them in every Sermon. It smells rankly of a censorious and critical Humour to condemn them (as I have heard some do) upon this account. Charity that thinketh no Evil, would take it by a far better Handle, and put a more favourable Construction on it.

What can offend them at doing, would they turn Solifidians, and supplant Christian Practice, by that very Faith that should promote it? and never fails to do it, when it is true and genuin. Are they of the Mind, that Christ has done all for them? that he has repented, believed and led a godly Life, and that they have nothing to do, but to be firmly perswaded, That what Christ did for the Redemption of Mankind, he did it for them, and that they shall have Life and Salvation by him, without doing any Thing themselves for the saving of their Souls? This I own is Lettice for our Lips; sweet Doctrine to our depraved and corrupt Gust, that makes it relish so well with us. We find an handsom Apology for a bad Life by this wretched Scheme, and can supply the Want of good Works by a presumptuous Confidence, that Christ has done all, and that we need do nothing: We make Faith and Practice clash together, and undermine the one, under a senseless Pretence of raising the other. We make Christ himself the Minister of Sin, and exalt his priestly Office upon the Ruins of his kingly Power. O pitiful Ignorance! and wretched Impudence! thus to treat the Gospel and its blessed Author. Has he come into the World, lived and died to discharge our

our Obligation to Holiness, and procure for us an Immunity to live as we list? We must *burn* our *Bibles* before we can fall in with these licentious Sentiments, we must devise a new Gospel, that will reconcile the Hopes of Heaven with a bad Life.

All that Christ has done and suffered, all the Blessings he has purchased by his Death and Sacrifice, are made use of, to press Holiness in all manner of Life and Conversation on us, he died for us, that we might not live to our selves, but to him who died and gave himself for us. We are created again in Christ Jesus unto good Works, we are made Partakers of the divine Nature, that the Life of Jesus may appear in ours. Great and precious Promises are given us, that we may cleanse our selves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God. The blessed Spirit is given by Jesus, to purify our Souls, and to strengthen us for every good Word and Work. That very Faith we would raise upon the Ruins of Practice, is not only the Instrument of our Justification, but also of our Sanctification, it purifies the Heart, works by Love, and is followed with good Works. Almost every Leaf and Page in our Bible urges *Doing* upon us, what then can ail us at it?

'Tis no new Thing to find such a mighty Opposition raised against *good Works*, 'tis as old as the very first Age of Christianity. The Apostle James Chap. ii. disputes against these who exalted Faith upon the Ruins of *good Works*. Simon Magus that Arch-heretick was a great Enemy to *Doing*. The impure Gnosticks maintained, that to the pure all Things were pure; *omnia munda mundis*, was their

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beloved Maxim, that they made Use of to serve their filthy Purposes.

Under the Darkness of Popery the Merit of good Works was highly extolled, a Man might not only merit for himself, but have something to spare over and above to his Neighbours. This Superstition was wisely thrown into the Bank at Rome, that the high Pontiff has the Keys of, and for his own Conveniency dispenses Pardons and Indulgencies to any Man more bid. When the Light of the glorious Reformation broke out, the Doctrine of a Sinner's justification was set on its true Basis, to be by Faith alone, without the Works of the Law. This shacked the Credit of the Romish Bank; the great Platana, whereby the Craftsmen had their Wealth, was set at nought, Sinners were directed to the Treasure of Christ's Merits, for all they needed, for Time and thro' Eternity, but (as one observes) where God sets up a Church, there the Devil will not fail to set up a Chapel. Some arose in these Times, who maintained that Doing and Good Works, were pernicious to Salvation. As in the Days of the Apostles, swarms of impure Hereticks arose to corrupt the Purity of the Gospel, so at the Reformation, the Devil raised up many false dreaming Persons, who vented filthy Doctrines, that he might blast the Credit of so glorious a Work. The Papists have not failed to charge (tho' very unjustly) all the Rove-ries and Dreams they vented upon the Reformation it self, that they might create Prejudices in the Minds of Men against it. If we consult Protestant Confessions, we shall find them all declaring, that Good Works are necessary to Salvation, tho' they plainly, according to the Doctrine of Paul, assert the Sin-

Sinner's Justification by Faith without the Works of the Law.

How unreasonable then must it be, to be offended at these, who press *Doing* upon us? They do nothing, but what our Bible and all Protestant *Confessions* do. How inconsistent is this Temper and Disposition of Soul, with what you see, was the holy Psalmist's, *Psal. cxix. 5. O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes.* 97 Ver. *O how do I love thy Law.* — *My Heart breaketh for longing that it hath to thy Precepts.* Hypocrites will be tickled with the Grace and Goodness of the Promises, who can't digest the Purity and Spirituality of the Precepts; but serious Souls are ravished with the Beauties of Holiness that they discover in them, and when they are in their right Element, 'tis their Meat and Drink to do the Will of God their heavenly Father.

We may exclaim as warmly as we please against *Doing*, but certainly *Practice* is one great and considerable Part of Religion. Faith without Practice is vain, Knowledge without it, is but airy Speculation, it swells us with Pride and Conceit, but will never please God, *John xiii. 17. Matth. vii. 24, 25.* Pretended Love to God without it, is but the Heat of a warm Fancy and Imagination, *1 John v. 3. For this is the Love of God, to keep his Commandments.* Pretences to Communion with God without it, are Dreams and Delusions, *1 John i. 6, 7.* If we say we have Fellowship with him and walk in Darkness, we lie and do not the Truth. Commend me to the practical Christian, who lives over Christianity in his Life, and is a living Image of Jesus Christ in a World that lieth in Wickedness, *James i. 26, 27.* If any Man among you seems to be religious and bridleth

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not his Tongue, but deceiveth his own Heart, this Man's Religion is vain. Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the World, ver. 22. But be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only, deceiving your own selves, Titus ii. 11. Micah vi. 8.

Few have the Impudence openly to attack Doing in Religion, they'll tell you they are for it, but not for thrusting it into Christ's Room. Very good, it is good always to be zealously affected in a good Thing; it is impious to make a Saviour of our Duties; if any should make them our justifying Righteousness, they would place them in Christ's Room, if they should urge the Performance of them, without deriving Strength from Christ's Grace and Spirit, if they should tell you that they go before, and do not follow Faith as the Fruits of it, they would preach in a wrong Way; but when they plainly and in exprefs Terms assert, that they are not our justifying Righteousness, that they follow Faith, that they are done in a Redeemer's Strength, what can offend us? When we hear Duty urged on us by Gospel Motives, from Gospel Principles to Gospel Ends.

Tho' I am not to make a Saviour of Duty, must therefore lay it entirely aside? God forbid, let Christ have his Room, and Duty its Place, in Subjection to him. Duty is the Way to the Kingdom, and let us never expect it, or Peace and Comfort from Jesus Christ, but in the Way of commanded Duty. They who think to find it, when they make no Conscience of doing their Duty, embrace Dream and Delusion. To which of the Saints will you turn, who ever had Peace, but in the Way

Way of their Duty? Tho' God will not save us for our *Doing*, yet he will not save us *without it*. If we think this *legal*, to urge *Doing* as the Way to the Kingdom, we don't well understand what we say. The Voice of the Law is, *Do and live*, perfectly obey and obtain Life. The Voice of the Gospel is, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of your Sins, live godly, righteously and soberly*, that you may be qualified for the Possession of eternal Life that his *Righteousness* entitles to. Let us not, under Pretence of exalting Christ, thrust out Duty, Christ will not thank us for such a preposterous Zeal. He came not into the World to free us from our Duty, but to enforce it on us; let us see if something don't lie at the Bottom of our Opposition, that we won't speak out. We would go to Heaven, but then we would carry all our Vices and Lusts alongst with us, and would have Christ to save us *with* our Sins, and not *from* them, and to take us to Heaven, whether we make Conscience of doing our Duty or not; but let us not deceive our selves, God will not be mocked.

I know it will be said; that they who exclaim against *Doing as legal*, are as punctual in their Duty, if not more, than they who stand up so much for it. Comparisons (as we say) are odious. I am not fond of them, especially when I cast mine Eyes upon these two Places of Scripture, *Isa. lxxv. 5. Which say, Stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou: These are a Smoke in my Nose, and a Fire that burneth all the Day.* Luke xviii. 11. *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thank thee, that I am not as other Men are, Extortioners, unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the Week, I give Tithes of all that I possess.*

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Y^ess. Yet without Offence I may say, that some are much better than their *Principles* allow them to be, and some are very far from coming up to them. One speaking of the *Papists*, says, Many of them are much *better-natur'd*, than their *cruel Religion* permits them to be; so I may say of some, that they are *better* than their *Principles*, for they have something in their *Hearts* which preserves them from the Infection of them, which were they followed forth in all their natural Consequences, would lead them directly to *Looseness*, but then it should be considered, that every one has not the same Antidote to preserve him from the fatal Consequences of loose Principles.

As I don't conceive any of the *Ways* above-mentioned to be *legal Preaching*, neither can I think, that the asserting the *Conditionality of the Covenant Grace is legal*.

I know that a great deal of *Dust* has been rais'd about the *Word Condition*, some are dreadfully frighted at it, they affix very terrible Ideas to it, and then fall a trembling at *Bugbears* of their own making. Would they strip it off these Creatures of their Fancy, the frightful *Spectre* would vanish, and it would appear as white and innocent as a Lamb. I look on the *Word Condition* to be good or bad, just as Men take it. If by *Condition* be meant that which *merits* any Thing at the Hand of God, that founds our *Title* to Heaven, or is practicable by the *Power and Strength* of our natural Abilities, or any Thing done by us, that comes in the Room of perfect Obedience, under the first Covenant, or any Thing previous, as the *Condition of the first Covenant*, I shall freely own that I am not for a *Condition* in any of these Senses.

The

The first Grace is absolutely promised and given
*Jer. xxxii. 37, 38, 39, 40. Behold, I will gather them
 out of all Nations, &c. Ver. 38. And they shall be my
 People, and I will be their God. Ver. 39. And I will
 give them one Heart, and one Way, that they may fear
 me for ever, for the Good of them, and of their Children
 after them. Ver. 40. I will make an everlasting
 Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from
 them, to do them Good; but I will put my Fear
 in their Hearts, and they shall not depart from me.*
*Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. A new Heart also will I give
 you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will
 take away the stony Heart out of your Flesh, and I will
 give you an Heart of Flesh. And Ver. 27. And I will
 put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk
 in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments, and
 fear them.* Faith does not merit the Blessings of the
 Covenant; for Christ hath merited all, and let us have
 nothing for us to merit. Faith is the Fruit of the
 Blood and Purchase, as well as the Blessings of
 the Covenant, which are suspended upon our be-
 lieving. Faith is not the Foundation of our Title;
 this is owing to the Righteousness of a Redeemer
 apprehended by Faith. Faith hath not this same
 Place in the Covenant of Grace, that perfect Obedi-
 ence had in the Covenant of Works, Adam's Title
 would have been built on his perfect personal Righteousness,
 our Title is not grounded on our Faith
 or any Thing in us, but upon a perfect Righteousness
 without us, which becomes ours, when we be-
 lieve in Jesus: Faith is not the Product of our
 natural Powers or Abilities, but the Gift of God
*Eph. ii. 8. Adam had a Power to do what was
 required of him, but our Locks are cut, our Strength
 departed from us, and it must be given us of God
 to believe.*

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If we take *Condition* in the Sense that's given of by the pious Mr. *Flavel*, and our *larger Catechism*, think it as clear as Sun-shine, that the Covenant Grace must be *conditional*, and that *Faith* is the *condition* thereof, *Larger Cat. Ans. to Quest. 32.* The Grace of God is manifested in the second Covenant, in that he freely provideth and offereth to Sinners a Mediator, and Life and Salvation by him, and requiring Faith as the Condition to interest them in him." *Faith* we see is expressly named a *Condition* and in what Sense it is we are also told, 'tis a *Condition interesting us in Christ.* There is a Difference between a *Condition interesting us in Christ*, and a *Condition entitling us to Heaven and Happiness.* *Faith* in the first Sense is a *condition*, but it does not entitle us to Glory. Under both Covenants, a *perfect Righteousness* is the foundation of a Claim to Life; but here lies the difference between the Covenant of *Works* and that of *Grace*, the first required *perfect personal Righteousness*, as the Foundation of *Adam's Title to Life*; the second Covenant admits of the perfect Righteousness of a Surety, that's the Foundation of our Claim to Life, and gives the Title. Faith is the Bond of our Union with Christ, it enters us into the Covenant, and gives an *Interest* in Jesus. Upon our being interested in him, his Righteousness comes ours, which entitles us to Heaven. The first Covenant required only perfect Obedience to the Precepts of the Law, as the Condition of life; the Voice of the Covenant of Works was *do live*, and not *suffer and live*, but by the new Covenant we see, that more is required than perfect Obedience to entitle us to Heaven. Jesus Christ perfectly obeyed the Precepts of the Law,

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and answered the Penalty of it, according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Redemption, that all may have a Right and Title to eternal Life who believe on him, *John. iii. 16. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.*

In the same Sense does the pious Mr. Flavel take the Word *Condition*, *Fol. Pag. 867. Edinburgh Edin.* He there defines an *antecedent Condition*, "which signifies no more than an Act of ours, which, tho' it be not perfect in every Degree, or in the least meritorious of the Benefit conferred, nor performed in our own natural Strength, yet according to the Constitution of the Covenant is required of us, in order to the Blessing consequent thereupon, by virtue of the Promise; and consequently the Benefits and Mercies granted in the Promise, in this Order, are and must be suspended by the Donor or Disposer of them, untill it be performed; such a Condition we affirm Faith to be.

The Scripture is very plain, that Faith in this Sense is the *Condition* of the Covenant, for 'tis required of us as a *Duty*, 'tis required of us by way of *Condition*, as the learned Gillespy observes. *Pardon* is suspended on our *believing*, and *Damnation* threatened on all who do not believe: Faith is the Bond of our *Union* with Christ, and gives us an Interest in him and his Righteousness, *John. iii. 16, 36. Rom. x. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.*

If the *Covenant* were not conditional as to the Blessings subsequent upon the *first Grace*, I cannot well conceive how a Minister could preach the Gospel; he might indeed tell his Hearers, that Faith

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is required of them, and if they don't believe, they'll perish; but how can he adduce the Promise of Forgiveness to enforce Faith on them. He must either say, that the *Promise* is *absolute* or *conditional*; if *absolute*, it either respects Sinners as Sinners, or only *elect* Sinners as such. If it is *absolute* to Sinners as Sinners, then it is made to *all* Sinners according to the *Logick* we learned long ago, *a qua tali ad omnes*, &c. If *absolute* to *all* Sinners, then they must all be *pardoned*, for God will certainly make good all his *absolute* Promises, they are Predictions of what he will do, without any *Condition* to be performed on our Part: Now this is very false, that God pardons all Sinners.

If the *Promise* be *absolute* to the *Elect* only as *Elect*, then nothing more is required in order to *Forgiveness*, than our *Election* of God, and if nothing more is required, then whosoever are *elect*ed are *pardoned* Sinners: Now this is absolutely false, as you may see from *Rom. iii. 28*. Therefore we conclude, that a Man is justified by Faith without the Deeds of the Law. *Gal. ii. 16*. Knowing that a Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ, &c. A Decree to pardon, is not *actual Forgiveness*, it secures the Event, but gives not the Title. We must turn *Antinomians* and say, either that *Pardon* is from all *Eternity*, (as some of them maintain) or from the *Death of Christ* (as others) or from the *first Moment of our Being* (as *Crisp* asserts) before we can go in with the Notion of an *absolute Promise of Pardon* to the *Elect* as *Elect*, without any Act of theirs required of them, in order to *Forgiveness*.

If the Promise of Pardon be *conditional* upon our believing in Christ, then is the Covenant *conditional*, and *Faith* can be pressed on us as a *Duty* to be performed, with the Promise of Forgiveness upon our *believing*, which can't be done, if the *Promise* be *absolute*, and the Covenant a *Bundle* of *unconditional Promises*.

They who entertain this Notion, may tell us, that there is an *Order* *established* in the Covenant, and one *Blessing* is given in *Consequence* of another, v. g. God gives Grace to believe, and upon our Faith justifies; he gives Sanctification, and in *Consequence* thereof eternal Life, *Rom. viii. 29, 30.*

It is very certain, that there is a *wise Order* *established* for conveying the Blessings of the Covenant; no Body (so far as I know) ever called this in question, but I would fain know, how this *Order* for conveying the Blessings of the Covenant, excludes *Conditions* required of us for obtaining the promised Blessings. Will it follow, Pardon is given upon our believing, therefore Faith is not the Condition of Forgiveness? I think the quite contrary will follow, God has connected Forgiveness with our Faith, and the Believer is the only Person qualified according to the Gospel Promise for Pardon, and therefore Faith is the Condition of Forgiveness.

Tho' the *Grace* to believe be from God, this does not hinder it from being our *Act* in us, and required of us in order to *Forgiveness*. For if we will not have it to be a Condition required of us, because the Grace to believe is given of God, then *Holiness* must not be a *Qualification* required of us for our Admission into Heaven, because the Grace to be holy is from God. According to this Logic

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gick, nothing can be required of us in order to our Happiness. We must be entirely *passive* from first to last, *God must work all and we must do nothing*, which is the fundamental Error of the *Antinomians*, as the learned and pious Mr. *Rutherford* observes, *Survey of Antin.* Part II. p. 170, 171. " Dr. *Crisp's* Argument to prove, that Faith is no Condition of the Covenant because 'tis God only who worketh Faith in us, and believes in us (as Mr. *Town* saith) we being mere Patients. This Argument (saith *Rutherford*) hath no Strength, but upon the *Antinomian* Supposition, that there is no Tie, no Obligation lying on us to believe, and lay hold of the Covenant, as *Esaias* saith Chap. lvi. and by Faith to subscribe and sign the Covenant, and to walk in the Lord's Commands, and it must suppose, that we are Patients in believing and walking in God's Commandments, and God only worketh in us as in Stones and Blocks."

So far as I have observed, our *Divines* ever since the *Reformation*, have maintained the *Conditionality* of the Covenant: I shall produce a few Instances from our most eminent Lights, that, in my Opinion, may silence and stop the Mouths of some, who brag of their being more *evangelick* than their Neighbours.

Rollock on the *Rom.* Page 224. " The Covenant of Grace is the Promise of Righteousness and Life, upon condition of our Faith on Jesus the Mediator.

Rutherford's Survey of Antin. Part II. p. 63. " 'Tis a new Heresy of the *Antinomians* to deny a conditional Gospel, 'tis all one as to bely the holy Ghost, who saith, he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not, is condemned

"ned already." *Christ's dying and drawing Sinners*, Page 262. "Faith is the Condition of the Covenant of Grace, and the only Condition of Justification.

Dickson's Therapeutica sacra, Book I. Chap. 6. p. 100. "The Condition of the Covenant is Faith, receiving Christ for Righteousness and eternal Life.

Gilespie's Ark of the Covenant, p. 256. "The Covenant of Works stood by Works as the Condition thereof, but the Covenant of Grace stands by Faith as the Condition thereof." p. 271. He confutes *Crisp the Antimonian*, who asserts, that the Covenant of Grace is absolute without Conditions.

Durham upon the Revelation, Chap. III. p. 148. "There is a twofold Peculiarity attributed to Faith, besides what's given to Works and any other Grace. (1.) That it is the Condition of the Covenant properly. (2.) It hath an instrumental Causality peculiar to it in our Justification.

Guthrie's Trial of a saving Interest, p. 12. *Edin. Ed. 1722*. "Faith is named the only proper Condition, which giveth Right to the saving Blessings of the Covenant.

Mr. *Webster's sacramental Sermons*, *Edinb. 1705*. p. 87. "*Quæritur*, Why doth Christ make Faith the alone Condition of the Covenant of Grace? The Answer is, He makes Faith the Condition and nothing else, because Faith gives God all the Glory.

From these Instances we see, that if it be legal to preach the Conditionality of the Covenant, a Man has the Satisfaction of walking in extraordinary good Company, never one charged them with

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with *Legalism*, but *Antinomians*, who fell foul upon all Protestant Divines, who would not go in with their licentious Notions about *free Grace*; but I look upon their Tongue to be no Slander. 'Tis our Glory to be reckoned such legal Preachers as these great Lights were; and if our conceited Professors were more versed in the Writings of these great Men, I'm sure they would be less fond of *new-fangled* Notions, and *modern Divinity*.

There are several Things that have given rise to Mistakes upon this Subject. (1.) The confounding of the Covenant of *Redemption* and *Grace*. In the Covenant of *Redemption*, the Elect are not Parties, Christ is the sole Undertaker and Performer of all the Articles of the Covenant, for the Salvation of an elect World. The Covenant of *Grace* is founded upon the Covenant of *Redemption*, and elect Sinners in Jesus are Parties in it, and something must be done by them, before they enter into Covenant. Christ has not believed for them, tho' he has purchased the *Grace* whereby they do believe, and 'tis their Faith that interests them in Christ, and instals them in Covenant with God. (2.) The not considering that tho' the *first Grace* is purchased and given to the Elect, yet *Faith* is their Act, and required of them, by way of *Duty*. I. John iii. 23. *This is his Command, that we believe in the Name of his Son*. (3.) The not observing wherein the Difference between the Covenant of *Works* and the Covenant of *Grace* does ly; it is not placed in this, that the *first* was conditional, and the other absolute, both are conditional; but here lies the Difference, in the *first* the Condition was to be performed in our own Strength, and gave the Title to Life, in the *second*

the Grace is given to perform the Condition, which tho' it enter us into Covenant, does not give the Title to Life, for that's grounded upon the perfect Righteousness of a Redeemer. The *first* Covenant was a Covenant of Friendship betwixt God and innocent *Adam*, the *second* a Covenant of Reconciliation between Parties at Variance, who are made Friends through the Intervention of a Mediator, in whom elect Sinners must believe, in order to their being brought within the Bond of the Covenant. (4.) The carrying the Parallel between the *first* and *second* *Adam*, further than the holy Ghost designs, has occasioned abundance of Mistakes in Divinity. It can't be inferred, that because we are intirely passive in the Imputation of *Adam's* Guilt to us, that therefore we must be as entirely passive in the Imputation of *Christ's* Righteousness, and that because no Act of ours intervenes in the one, therefore no Act of ours should intervene in the Imputation of the other. The Scripture is very plain that we our selves must believe in order to our Justification, and study Holiness to make us meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

The last Head of *Legalism* is (as one tells us) to preach, *That Believers Sins in their justified State, bring them under a Liableness to the threatned and deserved Punishment, according to the Sanction of the Law.*

" This (says he) is *Legality* with a Witness, inconsistent with the Doctrine of Christ, with the Believer's State of Justification, and with the true Frame and Spirit of a Gospel Minister, and truly favours of gross Ignorance, both of Law and Gospel, and deserves to have the Mark of the Displeasure of a Protestant Church put upon

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“ on it, and to be exploded with all Speed lest the
“ Infection spread.

This I perceive is a *strange Thief*, and strange Names must be given to it, 'tis a *Gangrene* that must be cured by the *Excision* of such ignorant Ministers, who dare tell Believers, *That if they walk after the Flesh they will die*: 'Tis inconsistent with the Doctrine of Justification, and the Force of a Protestant Church must be called upon, to set a *Mark* upon such *Ignoramus's* as know neither Law nor Gospel.

What must this *Mark* be, but *Deposition*, and very deservedly, for they who are ignorant, grossly ignorant, both of *Law and Gospel*, are not worthy to be continued in the holy Ministry. These are hard Words, but 'tis our Comfort, that he does not produce Reasons to support the heavy Charge. I have observed, that some Authors *hawl* loudest, when there is least Ground for it, and put on *Airs* of Confidence when Argument fails them: *Brass* must supply the Want of *Reason*, and we must be faced down, as poor *Ignoramus's* and Enemies to the Doctrine of Justification to the Boot, if we have the Hardiness to say, *That a Believer's Sins make him liable to Death*. Had my Author all Knowledge, all Parts and Abilities; I don't think he would be one whit the worse Man or Minister, had he them sprinkled with a little more Modesty and Charity. I don't think it would be great Excess of Charity, to suppose it possible, for a Man to differ from him in this Point, and yet to understand somewhat both of Law and Gospel, and therefore might be continued as an useful Minister in a Protestant Church. But our Author is for leaving the dull Virtue of *Moderation* to your
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C——te *Ministers*. 'Tis too cold a Plant to grow and thrive in a warm Soil.

All these Divines who maintain, that *Sins past* are pardoned upon our first believing in Christ, and a sure Foundation laid for Remission of Sins to come, upon renewing our Faith and Repentance; for which effectual Provision is made in the new Covenant, all these (I say) must be branded as *poor Ignoramus's*, for they must of Necessity own that a Believer's Sins after Faith, make him liable to threatned Punishment. This, if I mistake not, is the Opinion generally received by the Ministers of this Church. Few, so far as my Knowledge reaches, fall in with our Author's Sentiments. If they must all have his *charitable Stigma* put on them, I am confident he has cut out abundance of Work for himself; whensoever he gets Power in his Hand, and becomes a *leading Man*, we shall have empty Churches in every Corner of the Nation. *Great Minds are ever merciful*. I hope, when the Author has the Justice done to his great Merit, to be made a *leading Man*; he'll content himself to *threaten*, when it is in the Power of his Hands to *demolish* us.

Had our Author been at the Pains to consult what *le Blanc* says in his *Theological Theses*, upon mortal and venial Sin, I'm apprehensive he would have spared this hard Centure. That Author tells us, that the *British* Divines at the Synod of *Dort*, (in the Judgment that they gave upon the fifth Article of the *Remonstrants*, which is insert in the Synod's Acts) maintain, *That there are some Sins, for which God denounces Wrath and Indignation upon his own Children, threatens them with Exclusion from Heaven, and eternal Death*. In their third Thesis they

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they assert, That such who are regenerated and justified, sometimes thro' their Default, fall into atrocious Crimes, whereby they come under God's fatherly Displeasure, contract damnable Guilt, and lose present Fitness for Heaven; and in the fifth Thesis they say that in the Interval betwixt the Guilt that a Believer contracts by his gross Sins, and his Faith and Repentance, *stat talis peccator merito suo damnandus, Christi merito & firmo Dei proposito absolvendus, non prius autem quam per excitatam fidem & poenitentiam veniam impetravit, actu absolutus*, that is, such a Sinner stands deservedly condemned, but by the Merit of Christ and the firm Purpose of God he is to be absolved, but he is not actually absolved, nor obtains Remission, till he renew his Faith and Repentance. After that Mr. le Blanc has quoted the Testimonies of many Divines, he concludes in his 61 Article, that the most Part of the Reformed are of the Mind, that there are some Sins of Believers that involve them *in eo æternæ mortis reatu*, and make them altogether unfit to enter into the Kingdom of God. I hope these Divines were not a poor Handful of Dunces, who knew neither Law nor Gospel. My Author and I may swell as much as we please with a Conceit of our uncommon Abilities, but the World will be so just as to say, that neither he nor I are worthy to bear their Books.

There are, I own, some sound Divines who maintain, That all Sins past, present and to come, are actually pardoned upon the first Act of Faith, and consequently the renewed Acts of Faith and Repentance are not necessary to obtain the Forgiveness of these Sins a Man commits in a justified State, but now, according to my Apprehension, these Divines must maintain, That a Believer's Sins make
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him liable. They own, that they are *pardoned*, and therefore, say I, they were *liable*, otherwise Pardon would be needless, for Forgiveness in its Notion supposes *Liableness to Punishment*, and takes it off.

A certain Author, who has raised a great deal of Dust amongst us, has a peculiar Scheme of his own. 1. He asserts, *That all the Sins of a Believer past, present, and to come, are pardoned at one and the same Instant, upon the first Act of Faith.* 2dly. *That the Moral Law to the Believer is intirely divested of the Threatning of eternal Death, that was originally annexed to it by the Creator, and is only fenced with temporary Rewards and Chastisements.* 3dly. *That a Believer himself must satisfy for Sins committed against the Law of Christ.*

The first Position is not peculiar to our Author, for some great Divines, who are far enough from his Way of thinking, maintain it, but upon very insufficient Grounds in my humble Opinion. To me 'tis inconceivable, how a Crime can be pardoned before it be committed; where there is no Transgression of a Law, there can be no Obligation to Punishment, and where there is no Obligation to Punishment, there can be no Forgiveness, or *dissolving our Obligation*; it would appear very strange to speak of *formally discharging a Debt before it be contracted*. If Sin may be pardoned before it have a Being, I don't see why we may not say with the *Antinomians*, that the Sinner may be pardoned before he have a Being, yea, from all Eternity. Not only must Sin have an Existence before it can be forgiven, but as the judicious Mr. *Hutchison* observes in his Sermons on the cxxx Psalm, Page *That Sin must be confessed, that it may be forgiven.*

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John i. 9. If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness. And how can Sin be confessed before it be committed? Our blessed Saviour commands us to pray daily, forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors; how could they pray daily for Forgiveness, if they were all pardoned at the same Instant?

The Antinomians, to put by the Force of this plain Text, tell us, that the Meaning is, that we must pray for the *Manifestation* of Pardon to our Consciences. I find that this Notion hath crept in amongst us, and is in the Mouths of some very flaming Professors, but I apprehend the Arms they borrow from the *Philistines*, will do them very little Service. I would gladly know, if all who name the Name of Christ, are not bound to put up this Petition to God; this I suppose won't be refused, but how can all pray for the *Manifestation* of Pardon? They who have not their Sins forgiven, can't pray for the *Manifestation* of what they have not. Besides, as the great Mr. *Hutchison* observes, we pray for *Forgiveness*, as we forgive others. Now we forgive others, by a real passing from the Wrong they have done us, and not by the *Intimation* of Pardon only, and therefore the Import of the Petition must be, *That God may really forgive us the Sins we are daily guilty of.*

If we confine the Meaning of the Petition to a Sense of Pardon, what a senseless Thing would it be in a Believer, who is firmly perswaded, that all his Sins are forgiven, to pray for a Sense of what he is already assured of? He may pray for the *Continuance* of it, and that his *Persuasion* may grow stronger and stronger, but can't pray simply

simply for the *Manifestation* of what God has given him already. A Malefactor (says Mr. *Hutchison*) who has got a Pardon from the Prince, when he is brought into his Presence, may seek the Intimation of his Pardon, but he were a Fool, if every Time he came into his Presence, he would seek the Intimation of it, and consequently (saith he) it is not the *Intimation* of Pardon, that's to be sought daily in that Petition, but *actual* Pardon: Moreover the *Manifestation* of Pardon is not Pardon, but something wrought in the Heart of a Believer, by the holy Spirit witnessing with his Spirit, that he is a Child of God; now this is a Work wrought in the Heart, and is not *Forgiveness*, which is a *juridical Act* without us; the *Manifestation* of Pardon is no more Pardon, than the *Manifestation* of a Saint's Holiness, is Holiness.

If we take this Freedom in explaining Scripture, we may explain away the clearest Passages in it. If when I am commanded to pray for Forgiveness, I must not understand it of *actual* Pardon, but only the *Manifestation* thereof, why may I not say, that when I am commanded to pray for Holiness, I must understand it only of the *Intimation* of Holiness to my Conscience? When I am commanded to pray *thy Kingdom come*, the Meaning is not, that it may really come, but that a *Manifestation* of that Kingdom may be made to my Soul. At this rate of interpreting Scripture, a Man will explain them quite away, and make a perfect *Nose of Wax* of them.

To shut up this Head, this Notion makes Christ's Advocacy in Heaven altogether needless to a Believer, as to his Justification. If all his Sins are pardoned *at once*, why needs he daily depend upon his

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Intercession for Remission? for he has it already. This is such an invincible Prejudice in my Mind against this Opinion, that tho' the Difficulties on the other Side of the Question were a thousand times more and greater, I could never give in to it. Ever blessed Jesus, I need thy powerful Intercession every Day, for the Purification of my Heart, and the Pardon of my daily Guilt. May I every Day make use of thee for Justification and Sanctification, may my last and expiring Breath be spent in the warmest Addresses to thee, my dearest Saviour, for Purity and Pardon. O ever blessed Saviour, thou couldst with the greatest Ease make us perfectly holy at once, but thou hast not thought fit in thy infinite Wisdom to do it, that we may be kept in a humble Dependence on thee, for daily Supplies of Grace to purifie our Nature, and for the same Reason thou dispensest Pardons every Day, that guilty Sinners may have daily Recourse to the Fountain of thy Blood, and depend upon thy prevalent Intercession in Heaven. May I never embrace an Opinion that strikes off my Dependence upon my ever blessed Redeemer, for Pardon as well as Purity.

If we consult our Standard, we'll find, that this Opinion does not agree with it, *Larger Catechism, Quest. 194.* We are told that the Petition, *forgive us our Debts as we forgive our Debtors*, has this included in it, "That God may continue his Favour and Grace to us, and pardon our daily Failings." If they are all pardoned at once, how can we pray, that God would pardon them daily to us, *Confession, Chap. 11. § 5.* "God continues to forgive the Sins of these that are justified; which implies that they sin", that God sees Sin in
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in them, that they need Pardon, and that he continues to forgive their Sins.

The *second* Opinion is, *That the Law as given to a Believer, is stript off its original Sanction, and only fenced with temporary Rewards and Chastisements.* This, so far as I know, is a *nostrum* of the Author's, and I shall not envy him the Honour of being the Father of it, but how this can stand with the first Assertion, is more than I can comprehend. All the Believer's Sins are pardoned upon the first Act of Faith, *i. e.* his Obligation to eternal Punishment is dissolved, and he is no longer liable to Death for them, and yet according to the *second Position*, the Sins which he commits when a Believer, do not render him obnoxious to eternal Death, for the Law under which he is (says my Author) does not threaten it, how then can they be forgiven? As the *first Position* maintains, *Sins to come* are pardoned the same way as *Sins past* are forgiven; now *Sins past* make liable to eternal Death, and so must *Sins to come*, and both are blotted out the same way, *i. e.* Liableness to eternal Punishment is dissolved by an actual Indemnity. Truths are of a piece and don't clash with one another, but Errors are as contrary to one another, as to Truths.

If it shall be said, that *pardoning of Sins to come*, is the *preventing of Liableness* from coming on a Believer, but the *pardoning of Sins past* is a *taking it off*, when it was on him, and so *Sins past* and *to come*, are not the same way forgiven. This, if I mistake not, is the Sentiment of a very dark Author, (Mr. Gilbert I mean) who tho' his Performance comes into the World in a mathematical Dress, and has *bright Notes* added to it, to clear his Meaning, yet
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it still remains one of the most cloudy *Pieces* to me, that I have cast mine Eyes upon, I can't find from Scripture, that God takes one Way to pardon *Sins past*, and another to pardon *Sins to come*; he forgives our *Sins past* or future, by dissolving our *Obligation to eternal Punishment*; for the sake of *Jesus his Son*. This I ever took to be the scriptural Notion of Forgiveness, and can't see a Foundation for the Author's Distinction. To say that Pardon is a preventing of *Liableness*, gives me a very strange Notion of it: I ever thought that it was a taking off the *Obligation to Punishment*, and not a Prevention of its coming upon us. In so far as my reading goes, I can't find either Lawier or Divine, that have another Notion of Remission than the taking off the *Obligation to Punishment*, for the Transgression of Law. But let us take Pardon in the Author's Notion, I would gladly know, how *Liableness* is prevented, is it not by actual Remission? The man is pardoned, and therefore the Person is not liable to Punishment, the *Obnoxiousness* to Punishment is prevented, but then it is by taking off, by actual forgiveness, the *Obligation to Punishment*; for Pardon in its very Notion, supposes an *Obligation to Punishment*, and takes it off. Suppose, for Example, a Prince should indemnifie a Subject for many Acts of Rebellion, and the Indemnity should bear, that for future Acts of Rebellion which he knows he would certainly fall into, he likewise pardons him, does not this imply, that for future Acts of Rebellion he is liable in Law, that stands in full Force against Treason and Rebellion, but his *Obligation to Punishment* is taken quite off by the Prince's Indemnity he has in his Pocket.

Let us now consider the *second* Position by it self, without relation to the *first*, for it may be true, tho' it clash with it. The *first* Assertion, if it be true, takes off *Liableness* entirely, for he who has all his Sins past and to come pardoned, is no more obnoxious to Punishment, than an innocent Man, who never transgressed the Law. The *second* Position is laid down by the Author, to gloss into an harmless and innocent Sense, the six *Antinomian* Tenets. (1.) *The Believer is not under the Law.* (2.) *He does not therefore commit Sin.* (3.) *God sees no Sin in him.* (4.) *God is not angry with him for Sin.* (5.) *He does not chastise him for Sin.* (6.) *He is not to confess his Sins, crave Pardon, nor mourn for them.* To put a fair Face upon these Positions, the Author sets up for the *Law of Christ*, as contradistinct from the *Law of Faith and Works*, and maintains, that it is intirely denuded of 'tis *original Sanction* to a Believer; this is what I look on, as a very false and dangerous Assertion.

It won't be refused, that the Law had a Threatning of eternal Death *originally* annexed to it; it will as little be refused that the *Sanction* was very just and righteous. Human Lawgivers may add a very unequal Sanction to their Laws, Crimes may be threatned and punished beyond their Desert, or what may be necessary for the Preservation of the Government, and the Good of Society, but 'tis impossible, that God can add an unequal Sanction to his Laws. It won't be denied, that the Sanction annexed by God to his Law, was founded upon the intrinsic Demerit of Sin, and did arise from the Perfections of the great Lawgiver. Sin has an infinite Malignity in it, throws Dirt upon all the Perfections of God, impeaches his

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wise, good and righteous Government, and cuts off the moral Dependence of the rational Creature upon God, his Creator and Sovereign. The threatening of eternal Death is grounded on the Demerit of Sin, and flows from the Perfections of the Lawgiver, who observes a just Proportion betwixt Crimes and Sanctions, and neither threatens nor inflicts more than what is consistent with the nicest Justice. If this be so, it follows by an unavoidable Consequence, that the *penal Sanction* is not an indifferent Thing, that might have been added to the Law or not, it results from the Nature of Sin and the Perfections of God, and is not the mere Effect of an *arbitrary Constitution*. If it be not *arbitrary*, depending upon a positive Institution, then 'tis *necessary*, and the Law cannot be without it. If it be *necessary*, then the Law cannot be divested of its *original Sanction*, unless you change the Nature of Sin, and alter the Perfections of the supreme Lawgiver.

It may be thought that this Way of reasoning is not much to be depended on; we may think many Things are impossible in an abstract Way of Reasoning, that *really* are not. If the Law be actually stript of its penal Sanction to a Believer, this Reasoning is fallacious. I shall freely own, if the Thing be in *Fact*, then 'tis certainly *possible*, but now the Fact must be plainly evinced. The Law had the Threatning of eternal Death originally added to it, and the Presumption is still on my Side, that it *has it*, till the contrary be made out, by the clearest Evidence from the sacred Records. 'Tis a vast Change and Alteration made on the Law, to divest it of its original Sanction, and to substitute in its Room only *temporary Rewards*

wards and Chastisements. Before I can go in with this Notion, 'tis not far fetched Consequences, but clear and pregnant Proofs from Scripture, that must determine my Judgment. The Text adduced by the Author (*Gal. vi. 2. Bear ye one another's Burdens; and so fulfil the Law of Christ*) is as impertinently alledged as ever Text was. The Law of Christ is the Law of Love; that's named his Law, because 'tis so remarkably exemplified in his Life and Death, so warmly pressed, and forcibly urged on us, is made the Badge of his Disciples, whereby he would have them distinguished from the rest of the World, *John xiii. 34, 35. A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.* The Apostle in the forecited Place, does not speak one Syllable of the moral Law, itript of its original Sanction to a Believer.

If we consult the holy Scriptures, we will find, that the Law retains its Sanction. Our blessed Lord, in his excellent Sermon upon the Mount, where he clears and vindicates the Law from the corrupt Glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, speaks not one Word of such a vast Change and Alteration made on it, as it was in his Hands; nay, so far is our Lord from giving the remotest Hint this way, that he tells all his Disciples, *Matth. v. 20. That except their Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, they should in no Case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Ver. 22. Whosoever shall say, Thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell Fire. Ver. 29 and 30. If thy right Eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy Members should perish, and not that thy whole Body should*

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should be cast into Hell. He takes it all along for granted, that the Threatning of eternal Death remained in its full Force and Vigour, and speaks not one Syllable of the Change of its Sanction to Believers. We find our Lord, *Luke xxi. 34.* cautioning his own Apostles against Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and the Cares of the World, lest the great Day should come upon them unawares. *Luke xii. 4, 5.* he threatens his Friends with everlasting Destruction, if from a servile Fear of Man, they should deny him and his Truths. *And I say unto you, my Friends, be not afraid of them that kill the Body, and after that, they have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear, fear him who after he hath killed, hath Power to cast into Hell, yea, I say unto you, fear him.* The Apostle Paul, when he insists upon a Sinner's Justification by Faith, without the Works of the Law, declares, that the Law is holy, just and good, and that Faith does not make void but establish the Law, *Rom. iii. 31.* I dare say a human Lawgiver would think his Laws undermin'd, and very effectually made void, if the penal Sanction, proportioned to the Desert of Crimes, were removed, and another put into its Room, that bears no Proportion at all to it; and if any should tell him, that by such an Alteration the Law is established, he could not but look on it as arrant Mockery. *Rom. viii. 1.* where he insists on the Privileges of Believers, *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,* he tells these very Persons, *ver. 13. That if they live after the Flesh they shall die.* How in all the World could he threaten them with Death, if the Law under which they are, had no such Sanction annexed to it? The Threatning no more concerns them, than

the Sanctions added to the Laws in France belong to us who live in Great Britain. The same Apostle, writing to the Galatians, Chap. vi. 8. declares, *That if they sow to the Flesh, they shall of the Flesh reap Corruption.* And Col. iii. 5, 6. *Mortifie therefore (saith he) the Members that are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleanness, &c. for which Things sake the Wrath of God cometh upon the Children of Disobedience.* 1. Cor. vi. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, be not deceived, &c.* If the Apostle had thought that the moral Law was disarmed of its original Threatning to Believers, he behoved to have said, *as for you, unrighteous, unclean, and idolatrous Unbelievers, the Threatning takes fast hold of you, but as for you, who are Believers, tho' you should prove unrighteous, Fornicators and Idolaters, ye are not to fear, for the Law under which you are, is disarmed of the Menaces of eternal Death.* If you are afraid, your Fears are mere Bugbears, that have no Foundation, but in your own vain Imaginations. Sin as much as you will, you can't possibly be liable to Death. Is this the Strain of the sacred Penman? or, is it not rather the Rant of an impure Gnostick, or a wild Antinomian?

If the Sanction be taken from the moral Law, it must either be, because Christ has suffered the Penalty of it, or Believers have an Interest in his Satisfaction, or, all their Sins are pardoned at once, or, because the Frame of the new Covenant under which they are, won't allow, that the penal Sanction of the Law should remain; but now, none of these, I think, is the Case. The first is not insisted upon by the Author, for tho' Christ has suffered the Penalty for the unconverted Elect, yet he owns that they are lying under the penal San-

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tion, till they believe in Jesus. The *second*, I think, will not hold either: An Interest in Christ's Satisfaction, secures Believers from the *Execution* of the *Threatning*, but does not *nullify* it; for if the penal Sanction must be abrogated, because they have an *Interest* in Christ's *Satisfaction*, why must not (as the *Antinomians* maintain) the *binding* Power and Authority of the Law be abrogated, because they have an *Interest* in his perfect *Obedience*? Tho' Believers have an Interest in a Redeemer's Purchase, it won't follow, that they are immediately delivered from all the Fruits and Consequences of Sin, they are not instantly made perfect in Holiness, nor freed from a natural Death, neither is *Liableness* to eternal Death taken off all at one and the same Moment, so that none of their Sins can bring it on them. They are secured from everlasting Destruction, and shall not perish, they have the Threatning of the Law converted to their good. As Believers have the *Sting* taken out of a *natural Death*, so they have the *Sting* taken out of the *penal Sanction* of the Law. The Sting is taken from Death, when it is made a blessed and happy Passage into Heaven and Glory, so is it taken from the Sanction of the Law, when 'tis turned to the spiritual Good and Benefit of Believers. God makes use of it to discover to them what their Sins and themselves for their Sins deserve, he uses it as the wise Governor and Rector of the World, to work on their Fears, to raise their Thoughts of the amazing Love of Jesus Christ, in bearing the Punishment that Sin deserves, and to drive them to him for daily Pardon and Forgiveness. These are noble Ends and Pur-

poses, for retaining the *original Sanction* of the Law.

Neither will it follow (in the *third Place*) that the Sanction must be discarded, because all the Sins of Believers are pardoned, upon their first Entrance into Covenant with God in Christ. I own indeed, if this were true, then *Obnoxiousness* to Punishment would be entirely removed; for he who has all his Sins pardoned, is no more *liable*, than if he had never transgressed the Law. But this Opinion (as I have endeavoured to shew) is groundless, and supposing it were true, it won't follow, that the Law is disarmed of its *Sanction*; for these Divines who hold this Opinion, own, that it still *retains* it, and to prevent a Believer's *Liableness*, maintain, that all their Sins are pardoned at *one and the same Time*. Forgiveness does not in its Nature take away the *Law's Sanction*, but secures from the Punishment that the Violation of it deserves. When a Prince indemnifies a Traitor, he does not abrogate the *penal Sanction* of the Law against Treason, but dissolves the Traitor's *Obligation* to Punishment, threatened by the Law; even so, when God pardons the Sinner, he dissolves his *Obligation* to Punishment, without dissolving the *Sanction*.

Neither, *lastly*, can it be said, that by the Constitution of the new Covenant, under which the Believer is, the *Sanction* must be done away, for I want to find such a *Constitution*, it must not only be said, but proven, and that by very clear and express Proofs, and not by remote Consequences. If I find the Believer threatened with eternal Death, for the Transgression of the Law, this is a clear and pregnant Proof, that the *Sanction* is retained,

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for good Ends and Purposes. I don't think it consistent with the Wisdom of the great Governor of the World, to disarm his Law of its *original Sanction*, with respect to Believers, for if they break in upon it, tho' it be guarded with such a dreadful and terrible Threatning, I think, they would much more do it, if this *Fence* were pulled down and quite taken out of the Way. The *Frame* of the new Covenant under which the Believer is, does not alter the Nature of Sin, nor discard the *Threatning*, but secures from the *Execucion* of it, and converts it into his spiritual Good and Benefit.

If we cast our Eyes upon the *Absurdities* that follow the Author's Opinion, I don't think, that we can be over fond of it; I shall touch at a few of them.

If the Believer be under a Law that threatens only *temporary Chastisements*, his Sins can deserve no more, for 'tis the Law that's the *Measure* of the Desert of Crimes. If it threaten temporary Chastisements only, the *Crimes* can't deserve eternal Death, and how can we reconcile this with what our Catechism tells us, *That every Sin deserves God's Wrath and Curse?* A Believer, let his Sins be never so great, can't deserve *Death*, for the Law, that he is under, has no such Threatning.

It will also follow, that the *Guilt* of Murder and Adultery in a *Believer*, is of a quite different Nature from the *Guilt* of these Sins in an *Unbeliever*, nay, that the *Guilt* of the *least Sin* in the one, is greater than the *Guilt* of the most *atrocious Crime* in the other; for *Guilt* has an essential Respect to the Threatning of the Law. Now the Law under which the Believer is, (according to our Author) is only

only fence'd with Threatnings of *fatherly Chastisements*: The Law under which the Unbeliever is, is guarded with the Threatning of *eternal Death*, and consequently the least Sin in the one, is greater than the Guilt of the most flaming Crimes in the other. Now, this is so far from being true, that the Believer's Sins are greater by far, and their Guilt greater than the Sins of Unbelievers; the Consequences indeed of Guilt in the one and the other, are vastly different; but a Man's becoming a Believer, does not change the Nature of Guilt, and make Adultery and Murder, &c. in him, deserve only *fatherly Chastisements*; for 'tis an eternal Truth, that they deserve God's Wrath and Curse, and whoever they be, who are guilty of them, deserve it, tho' a merciful God, for Christ's sake, will not inflict upon Believers, what they do deserve. "Every Sin (*Confes. Chap. 6. § 6.*) "both original and actual, being a Transgression "of the righteous Law of God, and contrary "thereunto, doth in its own Nature, bring Guilt "upon the Sinner". Now what is this Guilt? Is it only *Liableness to fatherly Chastisements*? No, (saith our Confession) "By it he is bound over "to the Wrath of God, and the Curse of the "Law". If the Believer be a Sinner, his Sins bring Guilt upon him, and you see what this is, by the Description given of it in this Article.

If the Law be divested of its Sanction, and bring upon Believers, only (what some name) *Gospel Guilt*, here you have a large Score of Guilt, even the Guilt of all these Sins a Man commits after he is a Believer, for which Christ has not satisfied; and how then can the Apostle say, *1. John i. 9. The Blood of Jesus cleanseth from all Sin?*

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The very same Sins of a Believer, have a *double Guilt* in them, *Legal and Gospel*: The *first* done away by a plenary Pardon, in an Instant, the *last* is not done away by the *Blood of Christ*, but by their own *satisfying* for them; as shall be further observed hereafter. The same very Believer is a *pardoned* and an *unpardoned* Person, he has *Guilt*, for which Christ has *satisfied*, and for which he has not satisfied, he has all his *Guilt done away*, and a great deal of it *not done away*, which he himself must *expiate*; these are *Singularities* in Divinity that I don't *admire* the Author for, nor can they ever make me his *Profelyte*.

If the Law be stript of its *original Sanction*, a Believer is not to *fear Hell*, tho' he sin never so heinously; why should he fear, when the Law which he transgresses, has no *Threatning* of eternal Punishment annexed to it? His Fears are mere *Phantoms*, nay, they are his Sins, for he is to be *perswaded*, that he is under a Law, only fenc'd with *temporary Chastisements*, and to be firmly assur'd in his Mind, *that what Christ did for the Redemption of Mankind, he did for him*, and that he shall have Life and Salvation through his Merits; tho' his Hands were *reeking* in innocent Blood, and he were wallowing in the very *Puddle* of Sin, he is not to be afraid of everlasting Punishment, for his Sins don't make him liable to it; nay, he is not to repent with an *evangelick Repentance*, that these Sins may be forgiven him, for 'tis *false Divinity*, to maintain, either that this is necessary to obtain the first, or subsequent Pardons.

A Believer, according to our *Author's Opinion*, could not be mov'd to Obedience, either by *Hopes* of Heaven, or *Fears* of Hell, for he is under a
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Law, that is only guarded with the Rewards and Chastisements of a present Life, it would be *servile* to be moved by the one, or the other; and an Evidence of a Man's being under the Law, which is a direct Contradiction to what our Confession says, *Chap. 19. § 6.* "So as a Man's doing Good, and refraining from Evil, because the Law encourages to the one, and deters from the other, is no Evidence of his being under the Law, and not under Grace".

The *Author's* Opinion gives us a strange Idea of *Christ's Rule and Government* over his willing Subjects. I ever thought, that the great Instruments of his Rule over his People, were the Rewards and Punishments of the World to come, that by these, the Observance of his Laws were enforced on them; but now Obedience to the Law can only be pressed on them by the Rewards and Chastisements of a present Life; you must not speak one Word of Heaven or Hell to them, for they are under a Law, that has no such *Sanction* annexed to it.

If we fall in with the *Author's* Notion, *Ministers* might in their Pulpits address their *Audience* after the following Manner. You, my Hearers, are divided into two Classes, *Believers and Unbelievers*; as for you of the *last Class*, your Sins make you liable to God's Wrath. If you worship false Gods, or the true God by Images, if you take his Name in vain, profane his Sabbaths, prove disobedient to Superiors, kill, commit Adultery, steal, bear false Witness, &c. you deserve God's Wrath and Curse; but as for you who are *Believers*, tho' you should break all the Commands of the first and second Table, tho' you had *David's* Adultery and
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Murder, Lot's Drunkenness and Incest, Peter's Denial of your Lord and Saviour, upon you, I must tell you, that all these Sins won't make you *liable* to Hell, for the moral Law, under which you are, has no such Threatning added to it. 'Tis *Legal*, *legal* to fear, you know neither Law nor Gospel, are grossly ignorant of a Sinner's Justification, if you in the least imagine, that your Sins make you obnoxious to Hell, they are not *evangelick Men*, but poor *pitiful Legalists*, who tell you, *that if you walk after the Flesh, you shall die*, they robe you of Comfort, and frighten you out of your Wits with vain Fears. I dare not, for my Soul, preach such Doctrine to my Hearers, whoever do it (as really must be done according to our Author's Sentiments) run cross to the Strain of the holy Scriptures, and open the *Sluces* for Impiety and Profaneness, to come rushing in upon us. The Age, God knows, is licentious enough, and Christian *Morals* at a very *low Ebb*, but if a Doctrine of this Nature get Footing among us, we'll grow and improve in the *Mystery of Iniquity*, and turn ten times, if possible, more licentious than we are.

If the Believer had no *Guilt* but only *Liableness* to *Chastisements*, I don't see how he could flee to the Blood of Jesus Christ for the Removal of his *Guilt*, for the Blood of Jesus does not cleanse from what they call *Gospel Guilt*, and we can't pray to God, that for Christ's sake he may *forgive* it. I hope, sincere Christians will never fall in with such *Notions*, as, to my Apprehension, are derogatory to the *Blood and Merits* of a Redeemer.

These are some of the *Consequences* that natively follow this Doctrine, which makes it very fright-
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ful to me, especially when I consider the Use that is made of it, *namely*, the putting a fair Face upon the above-mentioned *Antinomian Tenets*. The *Author* sets up for a *Reconciler*, his Book is an *Irenicum* to compose Differences between us and the *Antinomians*. 'Tis a good Work, I own, to make *Peace*, tho' a Man should have the hard Fate of getting *Blows* from both Parties, providing it can be done, without jumbling precious Truths and pernicious Errors together, which the *Author*, in my Opinion, has done, with abundance of *Cunning* and *Address*.

And now, to shut up this Head, I don't see how this Doctrine agrees with our *Standard*, Confession, *Chap. 6. § 6.* as above, *Chap. 11. § 5.* "God doth continue to forgive the Sins of those that are justified". This necessarily imports that they are *liable*, else he needed not continue to pardon their Sins. Our *Standard*, so far as I can perceive, hath not one *Grue* of *Gospel Guilt*, but looks on all *Guilt*, as a *Liableness* to eternal Wrath. *Chap. 19. § 6.* where the *Law* is spoke of under the Formality of a *Rule* of Life to a Believer, we are told, that it has *Threatnings* annexed to it: Now, whether are these *Threatnings* such as respect only *temporary Chastisements*, or such as also have a Respect to *eternal Punishment*? If we let the *Confession* speak for it self, we'll see that they have a Regard to both, "For the *Threatnings* of it serve to shew, what even the Sins of the Regenerate deserve". How could they discover the Desert of Sin, which is God's Wrath in this and the other Life, if the *Law* as a *Rule* of Life to a Believer, had only the *Threatnings* of *temporal Chastisements* added to it?

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I will freely own, that the Side of the Question which I maintain, about a Believer's *Liableness*, may be press'd with *Difficulties*, which, perhaps can't be well got over. I may have very good Reason for assenting to a Proposition, tho' I can't remove all the Exceptions made against it. I know very few Truths, but what are incumbred with *Objections*, and 'tis no good Reason to abandon them, tho' we should not be able to give a clear and distinct *Answer* to them.

The Objection of greatest Weight against *Liableness*, is taken from the *Imputation of a perfect Righteousness to a Believer*, and his *indefeasible Title to Heaven*, that is grounded thereupon, how can he who has an *unalienable Title to Heaven*, stand liable to the *Punishment the Law threatens*? This they imagine can't be accounted for, at least that it is extremely hard to be conceiv'd. I own the Difficulty, but a thousand Difficulties of this Nature do not in the least shake me, when I see it plain from Scripture, that a Believer's Sins render him *obnoxious* to the Law's Threatning. The smallest Thing in Nature is surrounded with inextricable Difficulties, the least Pile of Grass, or Grain of Sand mocks the Enquiries of the most penetrating *Philosophers*, and leaves them in a Maze and Labyrinth: We need not then be surprized to find puzzling Difficulties in *Divinity*, that we can't well get over.

They who start the Objection, would do well to consider, that an *Antinomian* may urge it, with as much Force against God's *seeing Sin in Believers*, as they do against their *Liableness*. God (may he say) looks on them as *perfectly righteous*, how then is it conceivable, that he can at the same Time
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look on them as *Sinners*? What the *Surety* has done for them, in Construction of Law, is just all one, as if they had done it *themselves*. How then can God see Sin in them, more than in Christ their *Surety*, who hath fully paid the Debt? For all the fair Appearance the Argument makes, we still maintain, that God sees Sin in Believers, and chastens them for it too; and so must we own, that tho' a Believer has a *perfect Righteousness* imputed to him, yet Sins in a justified State bring a *Liableness* on him. The same Answer that's given to break the Force of the *Antinomian Objection*, will remove, to my Apprehension, the Strength of theirs. We tell them, that the *Imputation* of Christ's *Righteousness*, does neither destroy the *Being* of Sin in Believers, nor abrogate the *binding Power* of the Law. It does not make these Things which are Transgressions of the Law in others, cease to be Crimes in them. Neither (say I) does the *Imputation* discard the *penal Sanction* that the wise Governor of the World retains for excellent Ends and Purposes, nor does it prevent *Liableness*; for the *Imputation* goes no farther, than God designs it should do by the *Constitution* of the new Covenant. Now he does not intend, that the *new Dispensation* should either abrogate the *binding Force*, or *penal Sanction* of the Law of Nature, but that it should found an *unalterable Title* to eternal Life, and secure the Believer from the Execution of the Threatning.

Excellently does the judicious Dr. Owen speak on this Head, in his *Treatise of Justification*, Page 343. "Upon the Supposition of the Creation of Man, the Law mentioned (*i. e.* the Law of Nature written upon Man's Heart) was necessary

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sary from all the divine Properties of the Nature of God; and upon a Supposition, that Man would transgress that Law, God being now considered as his Ruler and Governor, the Constitution of the Punishment due unto his Sin, and Transgression of it, was a necessary Effect of divine Righteousness. This it would not have been, had the Law it self been arbitrary, but that being necessary, so was the Penalty of its Transgression. Wherefore the Constitution of this Penalty is liable to no more Change, Alteration or Abrogation, than the Law it self, without an Alteration in the State and Relation between God and Man". In the same Page, § 9. "This Law, the Law of sinless perfect Obedience, with its Sentence of the Punishment of Death on all Transgressors, doth and must abide in Force for ever, in this World; for there is no more required hereunto, but that God be God, and Man be Man". Page 344. "As a Law, it continueth to oblige all Mankind unto perfect Obedience, under its original Penalty".

This great Divine (you see) is of the Mind, that the Law neither is, nor can be disarm'd of its original Penalty. We do not cease to be rational Creatures, whensoever we become Believers. Our Sins are Transgressions of this Law, that make us liable, according to its Sanction, and nothing does, nor can take off Liableness, but actual Forgiveness, by Faith in Christ's Blood, according to the Tenor of the new Covenant.

This is what occurs to me at present, to take off the Difficulty, if they who urge it don't think it satisfying, I shall compound the Matter with them, and promise whenever they remove the Difficulties

wherewithal *Nonliableness* is press'd, and entirely break the Force of the *Antinomian Objection*, they shall have a more satisfying Answer.

The Things that may occasion *Mistakes* upon this Subject, are, (1.) The not observing the Difference between *Liableness* and the *Execution* of the Sentence. These are Things of very distinct Consideration. Elect Sinners before Conversion are liable to *Punishment*; but the Sentence will not be executed on them. Believers are *liable* for the Sins they are guilty of in a *justified State*, but will not be *punished*; neither will it follow, that if both *converted* and *unconverted* Elect are *liable*, that then there is no Difference between the *one* and the *other*. A wide Difference there is. The *one* has many of his Sins forgiven, the *other* has none of his Sins pardoned; the *one* is in a *justified State*, the *other* not. The *one* has a Right to Heaven, which he will never make a Forfeiture of, the *other* has no Right to Heaven. The *one* has an actual Interest in the Promise of Pardon, which is *pleadable* by him, the *other* has no Interest in the Promise, and it is not *pleadable*, as appertaining to him, when he is in an *unconverted State*. The *one* has the *Sanction* of the Law, that brings on *Liableness*, actually converted to his Good, the *other*, when he is going on without Remorse, in his sinful Courses, has it not turned to his spiritual Good and Advantage. The *one* has a *real*, as well as a *relative* Change wrought on him, the *other* continues in the *Gall of Bitterness* and *Bond of Iniquity*. The *one* has the *Seed of God* abiding in him, that will never die, the *other* has it not.

2dly. The not considering, that the *Imputation of Christ's Righteousness* to us, does not at once remove

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all the Fruits of Sin, and the Fall. 'Tis a gross Mistake in the *Antinomians*, to imagine, *That we have all Things at once in Christ*. Tho' we have a perfect Righteousness imputed to us, we are not perfectly holy in this Life, we do not cease to be Sinners, for in many Things we offend all. We are not freed from the Calamities of this World, and the the Stroke of a natural Death. There is a wise Order established by God, for removing the Consequences of Sin. Upon our Faith, we have a Right to Heaven, and are secured from the second Death. There is effectual Provision made in the Covenant, that Believers shall obtain the Remission of their Sins, by the renewed Acts of Faith and Repentance, and that Liableness shall be entirely done away, when they enter into that blessed State, where they neither can, nor shall sin any more.

3dly. The not observing, that tho' God be a merciful Father in Jesus Christ, to Believers, yet he does not lay aside the Quality of a sovereign Rector and Governor to them, they remain still under God's moral Government, and the Law is the great Rule, and Instrument of his Government, as the judicious Dr. Owen observes in the above-mentioned Treatise, Page 382. "Wherefore it is by the Law, that the Rule and Government of God, over Men, is continued, whilst they are in *statu viatorum*, for every Disobedience, every Transgression of its Rule and Order, as to its commanding Power, casteth us afresh and further under its Power of obliging to Punishment. Page 381. "Every Law properly so called, proceeds on these Suppositions of Obedience or

" Disobedience, whence its commanding or punishing Power are inseparable from its Nature".

If Believers be under God's *moral Government*, and break his *Law*, *liable* they must be by the Law, the Mean and Instrument of his Government. The *Antinomians* speak consistently, when they say, *That Believers are not under the Law, that they do not sin, and therefore cannot be liable*. But to own that they are under the Law, that they transgress it, and yet are not *liable*, this does not hang together. If we own that they *sin*, we must own that they must be *liable*, till Pardon take it off and remove it.

The *third Position* is, *That the Believer himself must satisfy by his Obedience, for the Sins he commits against the Law of Christ*. Marrow II Part, Edit. 6. anno 1648. Pag. 177. " For tho' Faith in the Blood of Christ takes away that Guilt, which subjecteth you to the legal Curse, yet Obedience must take away that Guilt, which subjecteth you to a fatherly Displeasure". The Law to the Believer, according to the *Author*, hath only the Threatning of *temporary Chastisements* or fatherly Displeasure annexed to it, and all the Guilt he can contract, is a *Liableness* to fatherly Displeasure or temporary Chastisements, which is done away not by *Faith* in the Blood of Christ, but by his own *Obedience*. This Passage is not to be found in the *Edinb.* Edit. 1722. Pag. 145. where it is entirely passed over, it has got a Cast of their *index expurgatorius*. The Reason of this Management is pretty plain and obvious, they did not think it for their *Credit*, that an *Author* they had so warmly defended, should venture abroad here with such *stumbling Doctrine*. Good People must be gulled into

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an Opinion of the *Excellency and Spirituality* of the *Author's Performances*, and therefore the *Passage* must be entirely *dropt*, that the *Author's Reputation* might not sink low in their Eyes.

This *third and last Position* is near of Kin to the Popish Doctrine of *Christ's satisfying*, to deliver us from eternal but not from temporary Punishment. 'Tis highly derogatory to the perfect Satisfaction of Christ, and makes Believers *joynt Satisfiers* with him, he takes away the *Guilt* that subjects to the *legal Curse*, they, the *Guilt* that subjects to *fatherly Displeasure* or temporary *Chastisements*. He hath appeased God's Wrath as a *Judge*, they must appease his Wrath as a *Father* by their Obedience. He has satisfied for their Sins as they are against the *Law*, fenced with the Threatning of *eternal Death*, they must satisfy for all their Sins, as they are against the *Law*, fenced with the Threatning of *temporary Chastisements*; he has satisfied the *Law* as it is the *Creator's Law*, they must satisfy it, as it is in the *Hand of a Mediator*. What Protestant Ears can hear such Doctrine, without the greatest Abhorrence?

The Author's Doctrine sets up another Way of removing *Guilt*, than by the Blood of Christ, contrary to plain Scripture. 1. John i. 7. *And the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin*. It sends Believers not to the Fountain of a *Redeemer's Blood*, but to their own Obedience, for the Removal of the *Guilt* of these Sins they commit in a justified State, in a plain Contrariety to 1. John ii. 1, 2. *My little Children, these Things I write unto you that you sin not, and if any Man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins*. The Author's Position establishes a twofold Justification, the one, by Faith in Christ's

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Blood, to take away *legal Guilt*, the other, by the Believer's own Obedience, to remove *Gospel-guilt*, which is a groundless Fancy, that has not the least Foundation in Scripture. All the Justification that we can expect by the Gospel, is by *Faith alone*, Rom. iii. 24, 25 and 26. *Being justified freely by his Grace thro' the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation thro' Faith in his Blood.*

The *Author's* Notion raises the Believer's Obedience very high, when it makes it a *Satisfaction for Guilt*, and gives Ground of *boasting*, which the Law of *Faith* entirely excludes, Rom. iii. 27. The best Obedience of a Believer is mixt with much Sin. What must remove that *Guilt*? must it be Obedience? That Obedience has still *Guilt* adhering to it; what must take that away? must it be Obedience still? At this rate we'll run on in *infinitum*, and never come to an End. It was the Prayer of an eminent Saint, *wash my Tears, O Lord*; and all serious Christians are of the same Disposition, they cry to God to wash their *Tears, Prayers and best Obedience, with the Blood of a Redeemer*. They don't take Sanctuary in their Obedience, to remove the Guilt they contract in a justified State, but in the Blood of Jesus *that cleanseth from all Sin*. To which of the Saints will you go, who think to take away *Guilt* by their own *Doings*? The Mercy of God and the Blood of Jesus were the holy Psalmist's only Relief after his Adultery and Murder, *Psal. li. 1, 2, 7*. The best Saints that breathe would have a cold Coal to blow at, if their Obedience were to remove the Guilt of the Sins they contract after *Faith*, nothing, nothing can give Ease to their awakned Consciences but the *Satisfaction* of a Redeemer;

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the Experience of exercised Christians, is an effectual Confutation of the Author's abominable Doctrine. A serious Soul could not have one Hour's peaceable and quiet Possession of it self, were it not for the Blood of a Redeemer.

Thus I have examined the Author's Scheme, which, to my Apprehension, is false in every Part and Branch of it, highly derogatory to the Satisfaction of Jesus and the holy Law of God. 'Tis neither Law nor Gospel, but an Enemy to both, and good for nothing, but to render Sinners fearless, and to fill us with bold and presumptuous Hopes of Heaven (providing we can but persuade our selves that Christ died for us) when we wallow like filthy Swine in the Puddle of Sin and Impurity. 'Tis calculate for the Comfort of Sinners, but not at all to promote Holiness in them, and therefore I can never be one of his Admirers, nor of his Performances. I shan't grudge to own that there are many good Things in his Writings, but these good Things are handled to much better Purpose by our own Divines, and as they stand in his Performance, they are the Vehicle the *Hy Antinomian* makes use of to convey the Poison. 'Tis a poor pitiful Argument that I have heard some advance, O there are many good Things in that Author's Works. This, in my Opinion, makes them the more dangerous to injudicious Readers, who are not able to separate between the Gold and Dross, the Chaff and Wheat. I never yet saw Error propagated, but there were many excellent Truths mingled with it to make it the more palatable. The Devil is too wise to shew his cloven Foot. The best Way to carry on his Kingdom of Darknesse, is, to transform himself into an Angel of Light.

'Tis yet weaker to say, *That some serious People exercised in Godliness, have got Good by them.* I can easily reply, that as serious and judicious Christians, tho' perhaps not so easily, have a very bad Opinion of them, and have got no Good, nay have been mightily stumbled at them: And has not my good People, as good a Taste as yours? Must yours be the infallible Tasters? I hope they will not pretend to it.

I have heard some say, that Persons of shining Piety, have an high Esteem of that Author and his Performances. I own, that a *solid and substantial, an humble and unaffected Piety*, is the Glory and Perfection of human Nature, it makes us amiable in the Eyes of God and all good Men, nay they who are bad, if they have not smothered away all Sense of Good and Evil, can't but have a Value for it; tho' their Inclinations fall in with their Vices, yet their Consciences side with a sincere and undisguised Piety, and they can't but approve that in others, which they themselves won't practise. But now tho' a *shining Piety* be a very valuable Thing, and highly to be esteemed wherever it is found, yet I suppose we'll carry our Regard too high, if we build *Infallibility* on it. I find some Papists tacking *Infallibility* to the Pope's Chair, and paying a blind and implicit Submission to his Decisions; this is not the most innocent Part of Popery; and yet some Protestants are so weak, in Contradiction to their Principles, as to build a kind of *Infallibility* upon Piety: Q! very pious Persons patronize such and such Opinions, therefore they must be sound and orthodox. This, in my Opinion, is Popery grafted upon Piety, and discovers great Ignorance of the Protestant Principle. It opens a

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wide Door to let *Error* come stalking in amongst us, providing only it can find some of established Reputation, for more than ordinary Sanctuary, to espouse its Interests. Where are we, if such a Principle get Footing amongst us? *He is a very pious Person, and therefore must be in the right.* It would be no hard and difficult Task to shew, that the most pernicious Errors have been vented and propagated by these who have appeared with high Strains of *Spirituality*. But I forbear, lest it should be said, that I design a Comparison, which is very far from my Thoughts; but I may venture to say without Offence, That 'tis too great a Compliment to any Man's Piety, be who he will, to raise *Infallibility* on it. The Sun it self, that glorious Creature, has its Spots, and the best of Men their Blemishes and Mistakes. We are to call no Man Master, nor follow him further than he follows Christ; We are to try the Spirits, whether they be of God, and to take Mens Notions to the Touch-stone, the Law and the Testimony. Isa. viii. 20. To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them.

I proceed now, to discourse upon the second Head, namely, *Gospel Preaching*: And seeing the former Part has swell'd to a far greater Bulk than was at first design'd, all that I shall do, shall be, to give a few brief Hints touching the *Gospel Dispensation*, to remove some Mistakes about *Gospel Preaching*, and then conclude with the Character of a *Gospel Preacher*.

The *Gospel*, that brings glad Tidings of Salvation through Jesus Christ, is like a Plank after Shipwrack. We were all embarked upon the same Bottom with innocent Adam, he made Shipwrack
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of himself and his Posterity. The Gospel is thrown forth to save us from the common Wracks of human Nature, 'tis a remedial Dispensation, if I may so name it. The first Dispensation of God towards Man, had a Respect to him, as innocent, in a healthy and vigorous Condition; the Gospel considers us in a sickly languishing State, nay as dead in Law, and spiritually dead, tho' naturally alive, equally unwilling and unable to raise our selves out of our Rums.

The Gospel supposes us rational Creatures, under all the Obligations to Obedience, that naturally result from our Relation to God, and one another. It adduces a vast Variety of additional Arguments (that could have no Room in the Covenant of Works) to enforce the several Branches of our Duty toward God, our Neighbour, and in respect of our selves. It heighens, and mightily improves the Law of Nature, and presses all the several Parts of it, by the most powerful Motives.

The Gospel is a Dispensation of Grace and Mercy to miserable Sinners. Grace, Grace gave Rise to it, in the eternal Transaction between the Father and the Son, and runs through all the several Parts of our Salvation, from first to last. Eph. ii. 8. For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God. Titus iii, 5. Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he hath saved us, by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost. A Covenant was made with innocent Man, to display the condescending Goodness of God the Creator; a new Dispensation is set on Foot, to discover the Riches and Treasure of divine Grace to wretched Sinners, in

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at Consistency with the Honour of the other Attributes of God.

The *Design* of this *Oeconomy* (next to the Glory of God, Father, Son and blessed Spirit) is, to repair the *Ruins* and *Breaches* that Sin and the Devil have made, to bring fallen and rebellious Man back to God, as his *Sovereign* to be obeyed, and as his *Portion* to be eternally enjoyed by him, in the highest Heavens.

The great *Obstacles* that stand in the Way of our Salvation, are *Guilt* and *Pollution*, these must be surmounted and removed, before we can be saved.

As *guilty*, we have forfeited all *Claim* and *Title* to the heavenly Happiness, and are liable to God's Wrath and Curse, *Rom. vi. 23. The Wages of Sin is Death. Gal. iii. 10. Cursed is every one who continueth not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them.*

As *filthy and impure Creatures*, tho' we had a Right to Heaven, and were delivered from the Curse, we could have no *Communion* with an holy God here, nor the *Enjoyment* of him hereafter, *Heb. xii. 14. Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.*

As we must therefore have our *Obligation* to eternal Punishment *dissolved*, and our *Right* to the forfeited Happiness *restored*, so we must have the *Image of God*, lost in the first *Adam*, *restampt* in our Nature, that we may be in a *Capacity* to serve God here, and enjoy him hereafter.

'Tis not congruous to the *Wisdom*, *Majesty* and *Purity* of the great Sovereign of Heaven and Earth, to transact *immediately* with *guilty impure Creatures*, base apostate Rebels, who have affronted his Ma-

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jeſty, deſpiſed his Authority, and trampled his Laws and Government under Foot.

A Mediator therefore is neceſſary to interpoſe between the everlaſting Father and us, who in the Work of our Redemption ſuſtains the Perſon of the Lawgiver, is the Guardian of the Rights of Heaven and therefore is to ſee to have them vindicated, before we can be ſaved.

No Creature whatſoever is equal for this Work of Mediation between God and us, it requires infinite Endowments to go through with it, and to ſurmount the Difficulties that ſtand in its Way. No leſs Perſon than he who made the Worlds, can ſave a World of elect Sinners.

This Work then is put into the Hands of the Son of God, who is the ſame in Subſtance, equal in Power and Glory with the eternal Father, here 'tis placed out of all Hazard and Danger of miſcarrying. The Interests of Mankind were lodged into the Hands of the *fiſt Adam*, who very ſoon made Shipwreck of them, and brought Ruin on himſelf and his Poſterity. That the Work of Redemption might not miſgive, and ſo prove more diſhonourable to God, than the *fiſt Apoſtacy*, 'tis put into the Hands of one who is mighty to ſave.

He who is intruſted with the Work of Mediation, partakes of the Nature of both Parties, that are to be reconciled and made one again. John i. 14. The Word was made Fleſh, and dwelt amongſt us. 1. Tim. iii. 16. And without Controverſy, great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs, God was manifeſted in the Fleſh.

He is Man, that he might ſuffer, and ſhed his Blood in the ſame Nature that ſinned. Heb. ii. 14. Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Fleſh and Blood, he alſo himſelf likewise took Part of the ſame, that

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that thro' Death he might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil. For (Ver. 10.) it became him for whom are all Things, and by whom are all Things, in bringing many Sons unto Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect thro' Sufferings.

He is God, that his Death and Sufferings might be of Avail to satisfy divine Justice. As the Altar sanctified the Gift, so the divine Nature personally united to the human Nature, derived an infinite Virtue and Merit upon his Sacrifice. Heb. ix. 13, 14. For if the Blood of Bulls and of Goats, &c. Ver. 14. How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who thro' the eternal Spirit offered himself without Spot unto God, purge your Consciences from dead Works, to serve the living God? Acts xx. 28. Feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own Blood.

He is God and Man in one Person, that he might be the Center of Union, in whom God and Man might meet, John xiv. 6. I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no Man cometh unto the Father but by me.

This glorious Person, as Mediator, must of Necessity act for both Parties, for us with God, and for God with us.

He acts for us with God, by offering a Sacrifice to the Father, not only for the good, but in the room and stead of all elect Sinners given him in the Covenant of Redemption. John x. 11. I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd giveth his Life for his Sheep. Rom. v. 8. But God commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us. I. Pet. ii. 24. Who his own self bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree. Chap. iii. 18. For Christ also hath once suffered for Sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

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This *Sacrifice of himself*, which thro' the *eternal Spirit*, he offered unto the Father, brings a far greater Revenue of Glory to him, than if the whole human Race had fallen a Sacrifice to avenging Justice. It magnifies his *Law*, and makes it honourable, displays the amazing Terrors of his vindictive Wrath, the Beauties of his immaculate Holiness, the Treasures of his infinite Wisdom, and the Triumphs of his boundless Grace and Mercy. It secures all the Ends of the divine Government, and procures all the Blessings of the new Covenant.

The *Mediator* not only satisfies Justice by the Sacrifice of himself, but seeing the *Law* has a Claim of Obedience on us, he perfectly obeyed its preceptive Part, and fulfilled all Righteousness, that as by the *Disobedience of one Man*, many are made Sinners; so by the *Obedience of one*, many may be made righteous, Rom. v. 19.

Justice being thus satisfied, and the Demands of the *Law* answered, by the Obedience and Sufferings of Jesus Christ, God is in Christ, reconciling the World unto himself, and publishes this to us in the everlasting Gospel. II. Cor. v. 18, 19, 20. And all Things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself thro' Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the Ministry of Reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them, and hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation. Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God.

That the Reconciliation may be mutual, Christ who acts for us with God, must act for God with us, by removing the Enmity that is in our Nature against

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against God, and making us willing in a Day of Power.

For this Effect, he not only as a *Prophet* reveals to us what we should do, but as a *King* he subdues us to himself, and by the joynt Influence of his Word and Spirit, the two great Instruments of his mediatory Kingdom, he brings us to God as our *Sovereign* to be obeyed, and as our *Portion* to be eternally enjoyed by us. He sends his *Spirit* who acts under him, in the Administration of his mediatory Kingdom, to restore the lost Image of God to our Nature, to begin and perfect a good Work in us, and to apply by his efficacious and invincible Grace, the Redemption purchased by himself.

This blessed Effect of the *Word and Spirit of Christ*, is what in Scripture is called *Conversion, effectual Calling, Regeneration*, by which the Principles of Grace are planted in the Hearts of Sinners, and they are made Partakers of a new and divine Nature.

By the *Death and Obedience* of Jesus Christ, and by the *Word and Spirit*, the Obstacles of our Salvation are removed, by the *one* God is satisfied and reconciled to us, and the Blessings of the new Covenant procured for us by the *other*, the Enmity that is in our Heart is in a great Measure removed, and our Nature changed.

By the *Constitution* of the new Covenant, all our Intercourse with the Father is thro' the Son by the holy Ghost; no Man cometh unto the Father but thro' Christ; thro' him we have Access by one Spirit unto the Father. All Blessings flow originally from the Father, thro' the Son, by the holy Spirit, and all our

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Addresses to the Father are thro' the Son by the holy Ghost.

Seeing then our Intercourse with the Father is *mediate*, we must have an Interest in a blessed *Mediator*, before either we can have *Access* to his Favour here, or the *Enjoyment* of him hereafter.

We can have no Interest in him but by *Faith*, this is its peculiar Province, it *unites* to Jesus, and *interests* us in him, it gives Honour to him as *Mediator*, by consenting to his all-sufficient Mediation, resting on his almighty Sacrifice for Peace and Pardon, Grace and Glory, it receives him as he is offered in the Gospel, and with the greatest Satisfaction acquiesces in the glorious Device of our Salvation thro' his Death and Passion.

Upon our *Faith* we have a Redeemer's *Righteousness* imputed to us, that's the *Foundation* of our *Claim* to eternal Life, and the *Ground* of our *Abolution* from the Guilt of all our Sins. God no less pardons and entitles us to Heaven, than if we in our own Persons had obeyed the preceptive Part of the Law, and fully answered the Penalty of it, tho' he does not reckon that we our selves have perfectly obeyed and fully answered the Sanction of the Law, this would be a *false Reckoning*, which can't be imputed to a God of Truth, who judges of Things as they are, for *Christ* has done all this and not *we*, yet, seeing *he* did it in the room and stead of elect Sinners, they are no less pardoned and entitled to Heaven (upon the Imputation of his Righteousness to them by Faith) than if they had done it themselves.

As *Faith* is required to interest us in Christ, so *Repentance* is required of us in order to *Forgiveness*. *Repentance* towards God, and *Faith* towards our Lord Jesus

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Jesus Christ, is the Sum of the Gospel Doctrine. 'Tis injurious to the Honour of God, the great Sovereign and Governor of the World, to say, that he can or will pardon an *impenitent* Sinner.

By an Interest in *Jesus Christ*, we are discharged from no *Obligations* to *Duty*, that arise from the *Law of Nature* or the *moral Law*, but are tied hard and fast to them, and have them enforced on us by the most powerful Arguments.

So far are we from being *discharged*, that our *Obligation* is mightily *heightned* and *increased*, by all the endearing *Motives* of a Redeemer's Love, by all that he has done and suffered for us, by all the Blessings that flow from his Agonies in the Garden, and Blood upon the Cross, by his Authority as a Lord, his Example as a Pattern, by the Fruits of his Resurrection and Ascension, by the Powers of the World to come, by the awful Terrors of the great Day, and that dreadful Vengeance that will come upon all them who disobey his Gospel.

The *Spirit* is given to stamp the Image of God upon our Souls, to purifie our Hearts, and to bring us into a cheerful Compliance with all the several Branches of our Duty.

All divine *Influences* communicated by the *Spirit*, flow from *Jesus* the *Head* of his *Body*, to all the *Members* thereof, to bring them into a Conformity to himself in his Life, Death, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension, that they may be living Images of him, in a World that lieth in Wickedness. *Communications* from the *Spirit* are designed to promote Holiness in us, to enable us to walk worthy of God to all well-pleasing, and to abound in all the Fruits of

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Righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the Praise and Glory of God, Phil. i. 11.

To Jesus the blessed Mediator are we to look for continual Supplies, to help us to the faithful Discharge of our Duty, in all its Parts: For as the Branch cannot bear Fruit except it abide in the Vine, no more can we, except we abide in him, John xv. 4.

The Gospel then (as I take it) is a glorious Dispensation of the amazing Grace and Mercy of God to miserable Sinners, in and through Jesus Christ. God in our Nature, and the only Mediator between him and us, upon such Terms, as God of his infinite Wisdom hath condescended upon, the Gospel publishes the joyful Tidings of Pardon and Peace, eternal Life and Glory to all such as believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and repent of their Sins; it assures us of our Admission into Heaven, if by patient Continuance in well-doing, we seek for Glory, Honour and Immortality. The Gospel is the Ministration of Life, and of the Spirit, it reveals a Principle superior to Nature, the holy Ghost, the Author of all that is good, who works the first Grace in us, and makes us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of Saints in Light.

There are several Characters that appertain to the Gospel Dispensation. (1.) It humbles Man, lays him in the Dust, and stains the Pride of his Glory, that no Flesh may glory in God's Sight. Rom. iii. 27. *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what Law? By the Law of Works? Nay, but by the Law of Faith.* (2.) It exalts God, by resolving the Whole of our Salvation from first to last, into his sovereign Grace and Mercy. It ascribes all the Ill we do to our selves, and all the Good we do to God: It carries us entirely off our own Bottom, to the Grace of God

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God in Christ, for all we need in Time, and thro' Eternity. It says to every one of us, *What hast thou, O Man, that thou hast not received?* I. Cor. iv. 7 — And is the most mortifying Doctrine to human Nature, that ever the World heard of, *Pride* is the Bane and Ruin of human Nature, it sticks as close to us, as Ivy to the Tree; accompanies us in all the Parts of human Life, and vents it self under various Shapes. We are all naturally *Self-idolaters*, how niggardly soever we are, in giving to others what is their due, we are prodigal with a Witness in burning Incense to our beloved *Selves*. The Gospel strikes at the very Root of this Vice, it mortifies the *Pride* of our Minds, by the Sublimity of its Mysteries, and exalts *Grace* upon the Ruins of *Self-confidence*, *Self-sufficiency* and *Dependence*, that are so natural to us all. (3.) When it humbles Man and exalts *Grace*, at the same Time it promotes *Holiness* in us, it lets us see what an holy God we have to do with, and what Obligations ly on us to be holy, as he who hath called us is holy; it shews us, that one great End of Christ's Death, was to *redeem us from all Iniquity*. It discovers the Virtue and Efficacy of his Blood, for *sanctifying*, as well as *justifying* us; it presses *Holiness* from the *Conformity* that ought to be between Christ and his Members, and the *Hopes* they have of seeing and enjoying him for ever. The Gospel is that *Grace of God* that hath appeared to all Men, to teach them to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in a present World: By it are given to us exceeding great and precious Promises, that we may be made Partakers of the divine Nature, and may cleanse our selves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, per-

fecting Holiness in the Fear of God. (4.) The Gospel is the *Ministration of Life and of the Spirit*, it reveals a *Principle superior to Nature*, and directs us to Jesus Christ, for the *Aids of his blessed Spirit*, to strengthen us in the *Discharge of all the Duties and Offices of the Life of Godliness*. It gives the Believer a *Back for his Burden*, and makes him able to do all Things through Christ strengthening him; wherein he is *weak in himself*, he is made *strong in the Lord*, and by the *Power of his Might*; his *Duty becomes his Delight*, and it is his *Meat and Drink* to do the *Will of God his heavenly Father*, and of Jesus Christ his *blessed Redeemer*. (5.) It *excites to Diligence and Activity* in the *Service of God*, and the *Practice of Holiness*, it gives no *Encouragement to Sloth and Laziness*, but *cautions against it*, *Rom. xii. 11. Not slothful in Business, but fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord.* It is not for a *Religion of mere Principles and Opinions*, be they never so right, but recommends *Practice*, as the *crowning Part of Religion*, *John xiii. 17. If ye know these Things, happy are if ye do them.* 'Tis for *restoring Man in some Measure to his original State*, the *employing all his Powers and Abilities in the Service of his God*, and the *advancing his Honour and Glory in the World*; for this effect it sets *noble Encouragements* before the Believer, it assures him, *that his Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*, but *that in due Time he shall reap if he faint not*; it gives him the *Prospect of a Kingdom*, and a *Crown of Glory*, to animate him in a *patient Continuance in well-doing*; it sets *Motives* before him, that strike upon all the *Affections of human Nature*, upon our *Hope, Love, Fear, &c.* that we may *press forward toward the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God*

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God in Christ Jesus, and run the Race that is set before us with Patience. The Gospel hath no friendly Aspect towards *Quietism* and the *passive* Life of your *My-sticks*. It commands us to run, strive, fight, take the Kingdom of Heaven with Violence, and work out our Salvation, and give all Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure. It allows none to abandon themselves to a lazy and *unactive* Life, under a Pretence that God must do all for them. It bids us be as *active* in the Practice of all the Parts of our Duty, as if we were to go to Heaven by our Doing; and when we have done all, to say that we are *unprofitable Servants*. It commands us to build all our Hopes of Pardon and Happiness, not upon Works of Righteousness that we do, but upon the alone Merits and Righteousness of Jesus. And thus, it secures us on the one Hand, from an indolent Sloth and Laziness, and on the other, from making Shipwreck on Self-confidence, and Dependence, that proud Nature so much inclines us to. Would to God, that we did act in the Concerns of our precious Souls, as we do in the Things that appertain to our natural Lives: Tho' we know that in God we live, move, and have our Being, and depend every Moment on his efficacious Providence; yet for all this, we are at Pains to preserve ourselves: We eat, we drink, and use the Means God hath appointed for our Safety. And why should not we (tho' we are perswaded that the Beginning, Progress, and Perfection of the *divine Life* depends intirely upon God's efficacious Grace) be *active* and *diligent* in the Use of the Means he has appointed for saving our Souls? The Husbandman plows, sows the Seed, and covers it, tho' he knows, that it is the Influences of Heaven that

make it spring up, and grow to Perfection. Why should not we be diligent in using the *Means*, tho' we are perswaded, that it is a Redeemer's *invincible Grace*, that must make them effectual for our Salvation?

The holy Scripture sets forth in the most lively Colours, Man's utter *Inability* to do what is *spiritually good*. But what is the Design of this? Is it that we may fold our Hands in our Bosom, sit still and do nothing at all? By no Means; God does not design that it should be a *Pillow for Sloth*, but that it should drive us to him for *Grace* to enable us to do, what we cannot do of our selves.

Work out (saith the Apostle, *Phi'. ii. 12, 13.*) *your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling. For it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good Pleasure.* God's working in us, is no Encouragement to Sloth, but a Motive to Activity and Diligence, (6.) The *Gospel* ministers abundant Consolation to us under all the Calamities of Life, the Fears of Death, and Horrors of the Grave, and an amazing Eternity. When we are press'd with a Sense of Guilt, and ly under the fearful Apprehensions of God's Wrath due to us for our Sins, it is the *Gospel* that gives Ease and Relief to our awakned and wounded Consciences. It leads us to the true Sources of Comfort, the *Promises* of God, and all the other Well-springs of the Covenant. It affords the Believer divine and supernatural Comforts, the Joy of the holy Ghost, which sometimes make him rejoyce, *with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.* It leads us to the Blood of Jesus which cleanseth from all Sin, and is the only Thing that can give Comfort and Relief to our

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guilty Consciences, when the Terrors of the almighty God surround us.

Whatever *Scheme* of the Christian Religion Men may advance, that is not attended with these *Characters*, is the *Device* of their own Hearts, they have yet to learn the Truth as it is in Jesus. If any shall pretend to exalt *Grace*, but then supplant *Holiness*, this is not the *scriptural Scheme*. If any pretend to exalt *Holiness*, but then flatter the *Pride* of corrupt Nature, or place it all in Speculations, Notions, and Negatives, they go off the right Footing too. If any cry up *Practice*, and let not Men see where their Strength and Furniture for it lies, they mistake the Matter also. They make the Laws of Christ become, as *Peter* says of the ceremonial Law, *a Yoke which we are not able to bear*. They are rigid Taskmasters, who demand *Brick*, without directing us where we will get *Straw*. If any are for a Religion, of any, or all these *Characters*, but has none of the refreshing Streams of divine Consolation running through it, it is not the Religion of *Jesus Christ*, which is calculated for a Believer's Comfort, as well as for his Increase in Holiness and Goodness.

I come now to remove some *Mistakes* about Gospel Preaching. There are not a few who imagine, that the Gospel is only preached to them, when *Faith* is insisted upon. Faith indeed is the Foundation of all Religion. *Heb. xi. 6. Without Faith it is impossible to please him, for they who come to God, must believe that he is, &c.* It is honoured of God to be the Condition of the new Covenant, the only Instrument of our Justification, and the Means of our Purification; 'tis the most mortifying and humbling Grace, for it empties the Soul of *Self*,

beats down Pride and Self-dependence, and takes us entirely off our own Bottom to Jesus Christ for all that we need. I look on Faith (if I may use the Similitude) to be the same in Religion with the Stomach in the natural Body: It receives the Food, digests and converts it into Nourishment, for the Preservation of our Lives. Our Religion rises and falls, as our Faith grows stronger or weaker. Where there is no Faith, there is no Religion; if it be weak, we languish, if strong, we'll prove healthy and vigorous Christians. Our Piety keeps Pace with our Faith, that diffuses its Influence through all the Graces, and preserves them in a lively and flourishing Condition. Faith is the Principle of an holy Life. In Heaven Saints live by *Vision*, on Earth, not by Sight, but by Faith, that is, *the Substance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen*. 'Tis of great Use now, tho' it leaves the Saint at the Threshold of Heaven, where Hope ends in Fruition, and Faith in Vision. Love, Love is all in all in the heavenly State, and therefore the Apostle (I Cor. xiii. 13.) gives it the Preference to both Faith and Hope.

They are grossly ignorant of the Gospel, who have low Thoughts of precious Faith, but they are no less ignorant of it, who imagine, that there is no other Command in the Gospel, but to *believe*, as the Antinomians do, Rutherford's Survey of Antinomianism, Part II. Chap. 46. Pag. 65. Practice and holy Obedience enter very little into their Scheme of Religion; they exalt Faith to destroy Practice, and part these Things, which the sacred Oracles have inseparably connected, James ii. 14, 17. *What doth it profit, my Brethren, though a Man say he hath Faith, and have no Works? can Faith save*

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save him? Ver. 17 — *If it hath not Works, it is dead being alone.* Faith and Practice include the whole of our Duty, and whoever would divorce the one from the other, transform Religion into downright *Libertinism*. Both are to be warmly urged; *Faith*, in order to Practice, and *Practice*, as the Fruit and Evidence of Faith. We not only believe, that we may be justified, but also that we may be holy in all Manner of Life and Conversation; and if our Faith be not followed with good Works, it is vain and hypocritical, James ii. 20. *But wilt thou know, vain Man, that Faith without Works is dead.* Ver. 26. *For as the Body without the Spirit is dead, so Faith without Works is dead also.* What is Faith without Works, but a bold Confidence in God's Mercy and Christ's Merits, that is good for nothing, but to delude Men with the pleasant Dream, that they are going to Heaven, when they are in the high Road to Hell?

'Tis a great Injury to the noble Grace of Faith, to represent it as an idle and inactive Principle, the Nurse of Sloth and Laziness. 'Tis the Language of some, *only believe*, as if, forsooth no more were necessary in Religion, but *Faith*. This is as absurd as to say, *Lay the Foundation, and you need not trouble your self about the Superstructure.* The Apostle Peter was of another Mind, in his II. Epist. i Chap. 6 Ver. *Add to your Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge, &c. and give (saith he) all Diligence to do so.* Your *Solifidians*, I'm sure, will have enough ado to believe the Epistle of James a Part of canonical Scripture.

I have found many, who thought, that the insisting upon the *Privileges of the Covenant*, and the
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Blessings of a Redeemer's Purchase, is the only Gospel Preaching. 'Tis unquestionably true, that whoever neglect this, don't preach the Gospel of Christ; but then it is as true, that this is but one Half of their Work. For as the Covenant contains *Privileges*, so it requires *Duties* of us. We must believe, that we may be interested in Christ, and repent, that our Sins may be blotted out. We must walk before God, and be perfect. We must (II. Pet. i. 6, 7, 8 Verses) add to our Faith, Virtue, &c. that we may not be barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, and that an Entrance may be ministred to us abundantly into his everlasting Kingdom.

He who insists upon the *Duties* of the Covenant, no less preaches the Gospel, than he who insists upon its *Privileges*. The true Way (according to my Opinion) of preaching the *Blessings* of the Covenant, is, to enforce the *Duties* of it in and by them. Hath Christ died and purchased such glorious *Privileges*, how holy should we be? He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie us to himself, a peculiar People, zealous of good Works, Titus ii. 14. He died, that they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died and rose again, II. Cor. v. 15. *Privileges* are sweet, and go easily down with many Hearers, but *Duties* are hard Meat, which they can't digest. Had we a true Taste and Relish of Things, we would place our *Duties* amongst our *Privileges*. Is it not a Privilege to serve our God and Redeemer? Saints have always reckoned so, Psal. cxix. 45. *I will walk at Liberty, for I seek thy Precepts.* Psal. cxvi. 16. *Oh! Lord, truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant and the Son of thine Handmaid.*

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maid. The Apostle Paul reckons it a Believer's Privilege to be free from Sin, and a Servant of God. Rom. vi. 18. *Being then made free from Sin, ye became the Servants of Righteousness.* In Heaven, where the Saints have the noblest and most exalted Privileges, yet *his Servants serve him,* Rev. xxii. 18. When the Believer is at himself, the most amiable View that he has of Heaven, is, that there he shall serve God with the highest Transports of Joy and Ravishment, and will be all *Life, Soul and Vigour* in contemplating the divine Perfections, and the Works of Wonder that God has done; in singing the Triumphs of his almighty Grace and Love, and the noble Victories of a Redeemer's Blood.

I have observed, that many look upon preaching the exceeding great and precious Promises, as the only Gospel-preaching. They indeed do not preach the Gospel, who insist not upon them; but what I observed upon the Privileges, may likewise be observed here; this is but a Part of their Work, and very far from being the whole of it. Were indeed the Gospel nothing but a Bundle of unconditionate Promises, (as the Antinomians maintain) then I own, that this would be the only Gospel-preaching. But this is a very mistaken Notion of the Gospel, the Promises are a considerable Part, but not the whole of it, and therefore, as they are to be insisted upon, so are the Precepts, which are to be enforced upon us by the exceeding great and precious Promises. II. Pet. i. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises, that by these we may be Partakers of the divine Nature, having escaped the Corruption that is in the World thro' Lust.* II. Cor. vii. 1. *Having therefore these Promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all Filthiness of the*

the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God.

I have found some who imagined, that the only *Gospel Preaching* is to insist upon the *Freedom of Grace*. 'Tis a Truth very plain and evident to me, that the whole of our Salvation in all its Branches, is entirely resolved into the free and unmerited Favour of God in Christ. *Titus* iii. 5. *Eph.* ii. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Whoever they are, who think otherwise, without doubt mistake the scriptural Way of Salvation; but now, I can't go in with them, who think that this only is *Gospel Preaching*. 'Tis a very considerable Part of it indeed, and needs to be frequently inculcated on us, considering the strong Bias that is in our Hearts to *sacrifice to our own Net, and burn Incense to our own Drag*; but it is far from being the whole of a Minister's Duty. He is to exalt rich, free and sovereign Grace, and to press Holiness by Motives taken from it. I can never be of the Mind, that *Grace* can be exalted, when Christ is made the Minister of Sin, and gracious *Qualifications* wrought in us by the blessed Spirit, are excluded from having any Hand in our Salvation. This is not *Gospel Preaching*, but a gross perverting of it, and a turning the *Grace of God into Wantonness*. This is not the *Gospel of God* our Saviour, which is a *Doctrine according to Godliness*, but the *Gospel of the Antinomians*, who under the specious Pretence of exalting free *Grace*, undermine *Holiness*, and open a Door to Licentiousness. 'Tis upon this account, that *Rutherford* names the *Antinomian* the *Silver-golden Devil*, as was already said.

If Men would consider Things seriously, they would be far from thinking that they honour free
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Grace or its blessed *Author*, when they make it to serve any other Ends than these which a holy God designs it for. *Grace* is the Fountain and Origin of our Salvation, and the Streams of it run thro' the whole blessed Work. But how is it that God by his *Grace* intends to save us? Not in a Way entirely *passive* on our Part, but by training, fitting and qualifying us for Heaven, and making us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. Our Salvation consists no less in our being saved from Sin, than in our being saved from Misery, in our being restored to the Service of God, than in being repossessed of his Favour, and brought to the Enjoyment of him; and therefore the Apostle when he tells us, *Eph. ii. 8. That by Grace are we saved thro' Faith, and that not of our selves, it is the Gift of God,* adds, *Ver. 10. That we are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good Works, that we should walk in them.* 'Tis the noble Purpose of divine *Grace*, to take away all boasting from Man, and to save us in a Way worthy of a wise and holy God, and such as brings the greatest Honour both to him and the blessed Redeemer.

I have found some who think that the Gospel is only preached, when the *Operations of the blessed Spirit*, in his *regenerating, sanctifying and sealing Work*, are insisted upon. 'Tis beyond all Doubt with me, that this is a very considerable Part of a Minister's Office. The *holy Spirit* is the Author of all that's good in us, without whose *Grace* we can do nothing; the Beginning, Progress and Perfection of the divine Life in the Soul, is entirely owing to him. As the rational Soul makes the *Man*, so 'tis having of the *Spirit* that makes the *Christian*. *Rom. viii. 9. If any Man have not the Spirit of Christ,*
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he is none of his. Whoever they be, who make light of the Operations of the blessed Spirit, are Strangers to serious Godliness. They who turn them into *Ridicule*, (as some have done, of whom better Things might have been expected) *Speak evil of Things they know not*, and give an Handle to Infidels and Libertines, to mock at the Exercises of serious Christians, as if they were nothing but the Heats of Fancy, and the Effects of Mechanism. But Men may talk as they please, they'll never dispute a serious Soul out of its spiritual Sense, more than they'll reason a Man out of the Belief of the Sun's shining, when his Eyes are open to see it.

A Religion not animated by the holy Spirit, tho' it pretend to be never so *rational*, tho' it be set off with the *brighest Images*, and the most enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, is nothing but a *graceless, Christless, and lifeless Religion*. A Christian without the Spirit, is like the Body without the Soul, he may have the external Shapes of a Christian, but wants that wherein the Life of one lies. We don't become *Christians* as Men become *Philosophers*, by the Force of their Genius and the Exercise of their natural Abilities, but by being *born of the Spirit*. John iii. 5. *Except a Man be born of the Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*. They who under a Pretence of being more *rational* than their Neighbours, disparage the Operations of the Spirit, and make little or no Account of his divine Influences in Religion, give us another System of Christianity than we have in our Bibles. They have yet to learn a just Sense of the dreadful Depravation of human Nature, Man's Weakness and utter Inability to do what's spiritually

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tually good. Had they this set before them in a true Light, they would see the absolute Need of the Operations of the blessed Spirit, to begin, carry on, and perfect a good Work in their Souls.

But now, tho' it be the indispensable Duty of Gospel Ministers, to insist upon the Operations of the holy Ghost; yet this is far from being the *Whole* of their Duty, or the *All* of Gospel Preaching; they have many other Things to inculcate upon their Hearers, and to be the Subject of their Meditations and Sermons. According to my Apprehension of Things, *Practice*, *Practice* should be much in their View, when they insist upon the Workings of the holy Ghost; for we are created again in Christ Jesus into good Works; that we should walk in them, Eph. ii. 10. The Spirit is given, that we may walk in God's Statutes, Ezek. xxxvii. 27. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments and do them. Enlargements are given us by the holy Spirit, that we may run in the Way of God's Commandments, Psal. cxix. 32. Light is communicated to Believers, that they may keep God's Law. Psal. cxix. 34. Give me Understanding, and I shall keep thy Law. I look upon the Operations of the Spirit (if I may use the Simile, which I confess considerably halts) to be like the Workman's Tools and Instruments, without which he cannot do his Business; they are given us to enable us for every good Word and Work, and without them we cannot do the Will of God our heavenly Father. All Pretences to the Spirit's Operations are vain and delusive, if they bring us not to a Conformity to our blessed Redeemer, in the Frame and Disposition of our Hearts, and in the habitual Course and Tenor of our Lives. They have most
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of the *Spirit*, who are likest to Jesus Christ, and they have not the *Spirit* who are not conform to him, let their Profession be never so glorious.

In fine, to shut up this Head, I observe, that many suppose, that the Gospel is only preached to them, when *comfortable Doctrines* are warmly insisted upon. 'This, in my Opinion, is a very partial and imperfect View of a Gospel Dispensation. This is to view but the one Side of its Face, for as 'tis design'd to *administer Comfort* to us, so is it to *promote Holiness* in us, which is by far better than *Comfort*. When the most mortifying Doctrines of Christianity are insisted on, such as the *plucking out the right Eye, the cutting off the right Hand, the denying of our selves, the taking up the Cross, and following Christ, the forgiving of our Enemies, the Resignation of our Wills to the sovereign Pleasure of God*; the Gospel then is no less preached to us, than when the most *comfortable Truths* are enlarged upon.

I am not ignorant, how much we are in Love with *Comfort*, we like to hear these Things spoken upon, which minister to it; but I am heartily sorry to find, that we have not the same Appetite for *Holiness*, and therefore can't be easily reconcil'd to these Doctrines which press hard upon the Corruptions of our Nature, and put us upon the painful and uneasy Work of Mortification and Self-denial. I apprehend it will not be an ill-grounded Observation, if I say, that these Preachers find *warm Acceptance* with many, who insist upon *delightful Truths*, when such as put them upon the *Practice* of Duties painful to Flesh and Blood, and against the Grain of corrupt Nature, are but very little in their good *Graces*. The Reason

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son of this is pretty plain and obvious, and needs not be enlarged on; in short, 'tis this (and I am sorry I can't give a better) we love ~~the best~~ which pleases us; and therefore easily fall in with Schemes, which give us the Hopes of Heaven, without putting us to the Trouble of crucifying the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts thereof.

I proceed now to shut up this Essay with the Character of a Gospel Preacher.

The Gospel Preacher discovers to Sinners the lamentable Circumstances they are fallen into by their Apostacy from God, and goes to the very Source of their Wo and Misery, Rom. v. 12. *Wherefore, as by one Man sin hath entred into the World, and Death by Sin; so Death hath passed upon all Men, for all have sinned.* He represents the whole human Race as guilty and impure, who have the Guilt of Adam's Sin, their natural and federal Head, imputed to them, and Corruption handed down to them from natural Generation, John iii. 6. *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh.* He lets Sinners know, that they are condemned to Death by the first Covenant, and tho' naturally alive, are yet spiritually dead, altogether unable to raise themselves from the Death of Sin to Newness of Life. He represents Sinners as a very Composition of Darkness, Ignorance, Pride, Vanity, Weakness, Wickedness, wholly alienated from the Life of God, and bent upon all Manner of Sin. He lets them see, that the Understanding, the superior Power and Faculty of the Soul is Darkness it self, the Will Enmity against God and his Law, the Affections quite out of Order, turned from Heaven to Earth, from the Creator to the Creature, from Things spiritual to Things sensual; that poor Man is sunk down into

Sense and Earth, and lies groveling upon the Dust, as if he had served himself Heir to the Serpent's Curse, Upon thy Belly shalt thou go, and Dust shalt thou eat all the Days of thy Life, Gen. iii. 14. That vain Man pursues Happiness in a thousand Shapes, and seeks it every where but where it is to be found, in the Enjoyment of an all-sufficient God. He gives Sinners the most mortifying Images of themselves, lays the Foundation deep in the most profound Abasement of the Creature, that Pride, Self-sufficiency and Self-dependence (which are so natural to all Adam's Race) may be beat down, that so no Flesh may glory in God's Sight.

The Gospel Preacher shuts up all under Sin, that the Glories of redeeming Love may appear in their brightest Lustre. He preaches the Law to prepare for the Gospel, and brings the Sinner to Mount Sinai, to hear the dreadful and terrible Thunderings of a fiery Law, that he may make Way for the Consolations of Mount Zion. He wounds that he may heal, makes sore that he may bind up the Wounds, and preaches the Law as a Schoolmaster, to lead Sinners to Jesus Christ, who is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one who believeth; wherefore the Law was our Schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by Faith, Gal. iii. 24.

The Gospel Preacher displays the Glories of redeeming Grace and Mercy in the Contrivance, Purchase and Application of Redemption to elect Sinners in Christ, and resolves their Salvation, from the Beginning to the End, in all its several Parts, from Election to eternal Glorification, into sovereign, rich and free Grace, that God may have the sole and whole Glory of it, and Man may have nothing to boast

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boast of. *He hath chosen us in Christ, predestinated us into the Adoption of Children, to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, he bestows Redemption on us, even the Forgiveness of Sins, to the Praise of the Riches of his Grace, Eph. i. 4, 5, 6, 7. Grace, Grace, Grace, is all in all, in the Salvation of poor Sinners. He warmly insists upon the amazing Love of the Father, in sending Jesus into the World, the astonishing Love of a Redeemer in doing and suffering so much for Sinners, and the victorious and invincible Grace of the blessed Spirit, in applying the purchased Redemption. He shews how each Person of the ever blessed Trinity hath his peculiar Work in the Salvation of Sinners.*

The Gospel Minister opens up the Mysteries of the new Covenant, displays the mediatory Fulness of Christ, and shews him to be the Centre of all revealed Religion, the Purchaser of all divine Blessings, the Dispenser of all saving Grace, and that in him all the Promises are Yea and Amen. In a Word, that he is all, and in all, and therefore he determines not to know any Thing save Jesus Christ and him crucified, I. Cor. ii. 2.

He lets Sinners know, that all their Intercourse with the eternal Father is through the Mediation of Jesus Christ, God in our Nature, the alone Prophet, Priest and King of his Church, who as a Prophet reveals outwardly by the Word, and inwardly by the Spirit, the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven; as a Priest hath made full Satisfaction to Justice, in the room and stead of all these given him of his Father, and powerfully intercedes for them in Heaven, in the Virtue of that Sacrifice, which through the eternal Spirit he offered up on Earth. As a King, he brings Sinners to God as

their Sovereign and Portion, and to himself as their Mediator. For this Effect he has annexed to his mediatory Office the *authoritative Mission* of the Spirit to act under him, in the Administration of his Kingdom, to restore God's Image to the Souls of Men, and to work all that Grace in them which he has procured by his meritorious Death and Passion.

He preaches the Necessity of *Regeneration, Conversion* and *effectual Calling*, and tells Men plainly and roundly, that *except they be born again, they cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven*, John iii. 3. He calls aloud to the unconverted to think on their sinful and miserable State, and addresses them in the Words of the Apostle, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead, and Christ shall give thee Light*. He shews how the Spirit quickneth such as ly dead in Trespases and Sins, opens up his Operations, the secret *Energy* of his Convictions, and urges Sinners, not to rest in naked Speculations, but to seek after the experimental Knowledge thereof.

A Gospel Preacher leads Sinners to Jesus Christ for *Righteousness*; he boldly asserts our Justification by Faith, without the Works of the Law, and grounds our Title to Heaven, our Absolution from Guilt, and the Acceptance of our Persons, upon a Redeemer's perfect *Righteousness*, Rom. iii. 28. *Therefore we conclude that a Man is justified by Faith, without the Works of the Law*. Phil. iii. 8. *Yea doubtless, and I count all Things but Loss for the Excellency of Jesus Christ my Lord, for whom I have suffered the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung that I may win Christ*. Ver. 9 *And be found in him, not having mine own Righteousness which*
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is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Jesus Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.

The Gospel Minister when he establishes Justification by Faith alone, carefully guards Sinners against the Abuse of this Doctrine, that they may not turn the Grace of God into Licentiousness; Rom. iii. Ver. last. *Do we then make void the Law through Faith, God forbid: yea, we establish the Law.* Chap. vi. 1, 2. *What shall we say then? shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound? God forbid. He lets Sinners know, that tho' Works do not justify in the Sight of God, yet they are necessary to Salvation, and that the Faith that justifies the Sinner, is not a dead, but a lively Faith, that works by Love, and is followed with good Works.*

The Gospel Preacher opens up the Mystery of Faith, shews how it is produced, and how it acts; what are the Properties and Virtues of it: and lets Sinners know, that they can have no Interest in Jesus, until they believe, and that all the Mercy that is in God, and the Merit that is in a Redeemer's Blood, will not pardon and save impenitent and hard-hearted Wretches. He presses Faith on them as the Condition of the new Covenant, interesting them in Christ, and Gospel Repentance as a Disposition absolutely necessary in order to their Forgiveness. He declares to Sinners, that tho' Grace be purchased by Jesus, to believe and repent, and the first Grace be absolutely given, yet Christ has not believed and repented for them; tho' the Grace be his, yet the Acts of Faith and Repentance are theirs, and therefore they must believe and repent, else Christ's Death will profit them nothing.

The Gospel Minister guards Sinners against turning *lazy*, and laying aside the Use of Means God has appointed for their Salvation. He tells them, that God deals with us as *rational Creatures*, and not as *Stocks and Stones*, and therefore we should use the Means he has appointed. He represents (as the Scripture does) Christianity as a *Work*, a *Labour*, a *Warfare*, and the like, which requires the utmost Pains and Application. He tells Men, that *strait is the Gate*, *narrow is the Way* that leads unto Life, that they must labour for the Bread of Life, work out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling, give all Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure, fight the good Fight of Faith, and lay hold on eternal Life, run the Race that is set before them, and so run, as they may obtain. He tells Men, that they who are diligent in the Use of the Means, are in a more *probable Way* of being saved, than *impious Men*, who intirely neglect them, and abandon themselves to a lewd and dissolute Life. For tho' God has not tied himself to Means (he has been found of them that sought him not, and has prevented them with his Grace and Goodness) yet he has tied us hard and fast to the Use of them, and it is only in the Use of them that we can expect to be saved.

When the Gospel Preacher urges Diligence and Activity in the Use of Means, he takes care to caution his Hearers from resting on them, without referring them to the End for which a wise God has institute them, the building us up in Faith and Holiness, and bringing us to a Conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ, in his Life, Death, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension. He plainly tells them, that tho' they should be never so punctual in pray-

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praying, reading the Scriptures, attending on Ordinances, Word and Sacrament, yet if they are not made holy in all Manner of Life and Conversation in the Use of them, that God will say to them, as he did to the Israelites of old, *Isa. i. 11. To what Purpose is the Multitude of your Sacrifices unto me? I am full of the Burnt-offerings of Rams, and the Fat of fed Beasts, and I delight not in the Blood of Bullocks, or of Rams, or of He-goats. Ver. 12. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your Hand, to tread my Courts? Ver. 13. Bring no more vain Oblations, &c. Ver. 14. Your new Moons and your appointed Feasts, my Soul hateth, they are a Trouble to me, I am weary to hear them. Ver. 15. And when you spread forth your Hands, I will hide mine Eyes from you, yea, when ye make many Prayers, I will not hear; your Hands are full of Blood. Ver. 16. Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, &c.*

The Gospel Minister enforces Holiness, by all the mighty Motives the Gospel sets before us, and directs Sinners to the right Airth to get it, namely, to the ever blessed Jesus, who has the Spirit given him without Measure, that out of his Fulness we may receive Grace for Grace. He declares to Men, that Gospel Holiness is the Fruit of that Faith, which is the Bond of our Union with Christ, the great Instrument of our Justification, and the Means of our Purification. He plainly tells Sinners, that without Holiness they cannot see God; tho' it does not give the Title to Heaven, yet it makes meet for it, is the Way to the Kingdom, and a Means absolutely necessary, in order to the Possession of it. He tells Men, be who they will, that if they walk

after the Flesh, they shall die; but if through the Spirit they mortifie the Deeds of the Body, they shall live.

The Gospel Preacher lets Sinners know that Sanctification is as necessary to their Happiness as the Remission of their Sins. Adam might have been happy without Pardon (for had he continued in his innocent State, there had been no need of it) but it is simply impossible from the Nature of Things, that any Creature can be happy without Holiness. The Restitution of God's Image to the Soul of Man, of which he was dispos'd by the Fall, is among the principal Designs of our Redemption, Titus ii. 14. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.

The Gospel Preacher does not make Comparisons between Justification and Sanctification, as if the one were more necessary to the Salvation of a fallen Sinner than the other. Both are absolutely necessary in their own Room and Place, the one to restore our Right to Heaven, and deliver us from the Wrath that is to come, the other to qualify and make us meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

The Gospel Preacher rejects with the utmost Abhorrence all these Schemes that have the remotest Tendency to supplant the Practice of Religion and Study of Holiness. He presses it on us by all the Grace and Mercy that is in God, by the dying Love of a Redeemer, by all the Blessings of his Procurement, by the exceeding great and precious Promises, and the terrible Threatnings of the Gospel, that are denounced against all Unrighteousness and Ungodliness of Men. He declares to Sinners, that the

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the Spirit is given to make us *holy*, and that the Communications of the blessed Spirit are duly improved, when they engage us to *cleanse our selves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit*.

The Gospel Minister carefully guards against raising Christ's *priestly Office* upon the Ruins of his *kingly Power*. He presses Obedience to Christ as a *Sovereign*, because he died as a *Sacrifice*, and draws Arguments from his *priestly Function*, to enforce the Observance of his Commands as a *King*, and the Imitation of him as a *Pattern*. That very moment that a Minister loses View of Holiness in his Preaching, he departs from the great Design of the Ministry.

The Gospel Preacher presses all the several Branches of *Christian Morality*, that are of eternal Obligation, by all proper Arguments derived from our Dependence on God, as his rational Creatures, from the *Equity and Goodness* of his Laws, and the great Advantages of obeying them, from the *Authority* of Jesus Christ our great Lord and Sovereign, his blessed Example, and all the other Arguments, which the *Grace of God*, that has appeared to all Men, sets before us. His Indignation rises, and Zeal flames, when he observes Men pretending to Christianity, whose Lives are worse than those of *sober Heathens*.

The Gospel Minister urges on Men *Humility, Meekness, Self-denial, Heavenly-mindedness, Patience and Resignation to the sovereign Will of God*, he guards them against all *Filthiness of the Spirit*; which is no less dangerous and destructive to Souls, than *Filthiness of the Flesh*, tho' it be not so scandalous in the Eyes of the World. He calls them off from the *Love of the World and Conformity to it*, and lets them

them see what a mighty Enemy it is to the Salvation of their Souls, and what a vast Source of Temptations and Snares which drown Men in Perdition, Rom. xii. 2. *And be not conformed to this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your Mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable Will of God.* I. John ii. 15. *Love not the World, neither the Things that are in the World; if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him, for all that is in the World, the Lust of the Eye, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Pride of Life, are not of the Father.*

The Gospel Minister guards Sinners against the sly and subtil Workings of Corruption within, and the Deceitfulness of Sin, that turns it self into a thousand Shapes, to impose on us, and lead us captive to the Law in our Members, that wars against the Law in our Minds. He cautions against squint Looks to self, that's the Source of all the Wickedness that's in the World.

The Gospel Minister warns Men of the Power and Being of invisible Agents, the Enemies of their Souls, and the many Snares and Temptations they lay in their Way, to involve them in the same Misery with themselves. He exhorts Christians to be sober and vigilant, because their Adversary, the Devil, as a roring Lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour, I. Pet. v. 8. He endeavours to inform Men of the Devices of Satan, and directs them to the Use of the whole Armour of God. Eph. vi. 11. *Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil.* Ver. 12. *For we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darknes of this World, against spiritual Wickedness in high Places.*

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Seeing 'tis owing to a Gospel Revelation, that we have the *invisible World* so much laid open to us, the Gospel Minister endeavours to give as lively Representation as he can of a *future State* to his Hearers. He sets before them with all the Force and Warmth of his Spirit, the unspeakable Joys of Heaven and Torments of Hell, that knowing both the Mercies and Terrors of the Lord, he may persuade Men to be reconciled to God, to forsake their Sins, to believe in Christ, and study that Holiness of Heart and Life, that the Gospel requires of them; for which End also he frequently urges upon them the Consideration of that great Day, in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth also; and the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up, II. Pet. iii. 10. When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on all them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord and the Glory of his Power, when he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, II. Thess. i. 7, 8, 9, 10.

The Gospel Minister presses Believers to seek Communion and Fellowship with the Father and with the Son. I. John i. 3. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have Fellowship with us, and truly our Fellowship is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. He warmly urges them to maintain daily Intercourse with Heaven; tho' this may be turned into Ridicule by a blind World, who have not the Life of God in their Souls, and therefore can no more judge of the *internal Sensations* of

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serious and devout Christians, than a blind Man can judge of Colours, or a deaf Man of Sounds.

The Gospel Minister, in short, endeavours to declare to his People the whole Counsel of God, and to preach the Doctrine of the Gospel in all the Parts of it. The holy Scriptures are to him the Magazine of all divine Truths, and he dare not keep back from his People any Thing that's necessary to make them wise unto Salvation. He has these Words of the Apostle to Timothy engraven on his Heart, and hears them, as it were, always sounding in his Ears. II. Tim. iii. 16. All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness. Ver. 17. That the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works. Chap. iv. 1. I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his Kingdom. Ver. 2. Preach the Word, be instant in Season, out of Season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine. Ver. 3. For the Time will come when they will not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own Lusts, shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears. Ver. 4. And they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables.

The Gospel Minister not only understands the Subject he discourses on, but endeavours to feel it, that he may speak the Sentiments of his Heart to his Hearers, and transfuse into them the same Impressions he has wrought upon his own Soul; he believes, and speaks because he does believe. There is no being a Gospel Preacher without being first a good Christian and sound Believer.

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A Gospel Preacher has his Soul purified by the Grace of Jesus, from *base selfish Ends* in his Ministry. He does not preach himself but Jesus Christ the Lord, and himself a Servant of others for Christ's sake; II. Cor. iv. 5. He is animated by the noble Principle of Love to God and a Redeemer, and a warm and hearty Compassion to the Souls of perishing Sinners, of whom he *travails in Birth till Christ be formed in them*, Gal. iv. 19. He seeks the Honour of a Redeemer, the Approbation of his God, and not the thin and airy Applause of Men. With him it is a very small Thing to be judged of Man's Judgment, for he knows that he is not approved of, whom Man, but whom God approves of. He preaches not to please but to profit, and dares tell Sinners the most unpleasant Truths, for the Salvation of their Souls. He dares not for his Soul gratify any of the Lusts or Passions of Men, nor flatter the Corruptions of human Nature, for he knows that if he should thus please Men, he could not be the Servant of Jesus Christ, Gal. i. 10. He has his Faith fixed upon the great Day of Recompences that's approaching, and endeavours in all his Performances to eye an invisible World, and to act for Eternity.

In fine, the Gospel Minister endeavours to live over his own Sermons in his Life, and to transcribe upon his Heart and Practice all these divine Graces, that shined with a peculiar Lustre and Glory in the Life of Jesus Christ, that so he may be a Pattern to Believers in Word and Conversation, &c. I. Tim. iv. 12. Let no Man despise thy Youth; but be thou an Example of the Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity. Ver. 7. But

refuse

An ESSAY, &c.

use profane and old Wives Fables, and exercise thyself rather to Godliness.

These are some of the principal Ingredients in the Character of a Gospel Minister. I don't pretend to have given his Character at full length; there may be several considerable Lines left out, which the judicious and attentive Reader may fill up. But this I may venture to say, that they who thus preach Christ and his Gospel in Singleness and Sincerity of Heart, will be approved of him, and shall hear that blessed Sentence proceed from his Mouth. Matth. xxv. 21. *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant, thou hast been faithful over a few Things, I'll make thee Ruler over many Things, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* Ha. xlix. 5. *Tho' Israel should not be gathered, yet shall they be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and their God shall be their Strength.* They may be easie in their Minds, under all the noisy Clamours of *Legal Preaching*; that's the old *Antinomian Cant*, very little to be regarded by these who can say with the blessed Apostle, II. Cor. ii. 16. *For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God, but as of Sincerity, but as of God, in the Sight of God, speak we in Christ.*

Thus I have finished what I purposed on this Subject. I heartily pray to God that it may reach the End designed, the removing the Mistakes of some weak tho' well-meaning People, and preventing the Growth of new-fangled Notions, that are contrary to the holy Scriptures, and to our excellent Standard, then I shall think that my small Pains and Labour are well bestowed.

FINIS.